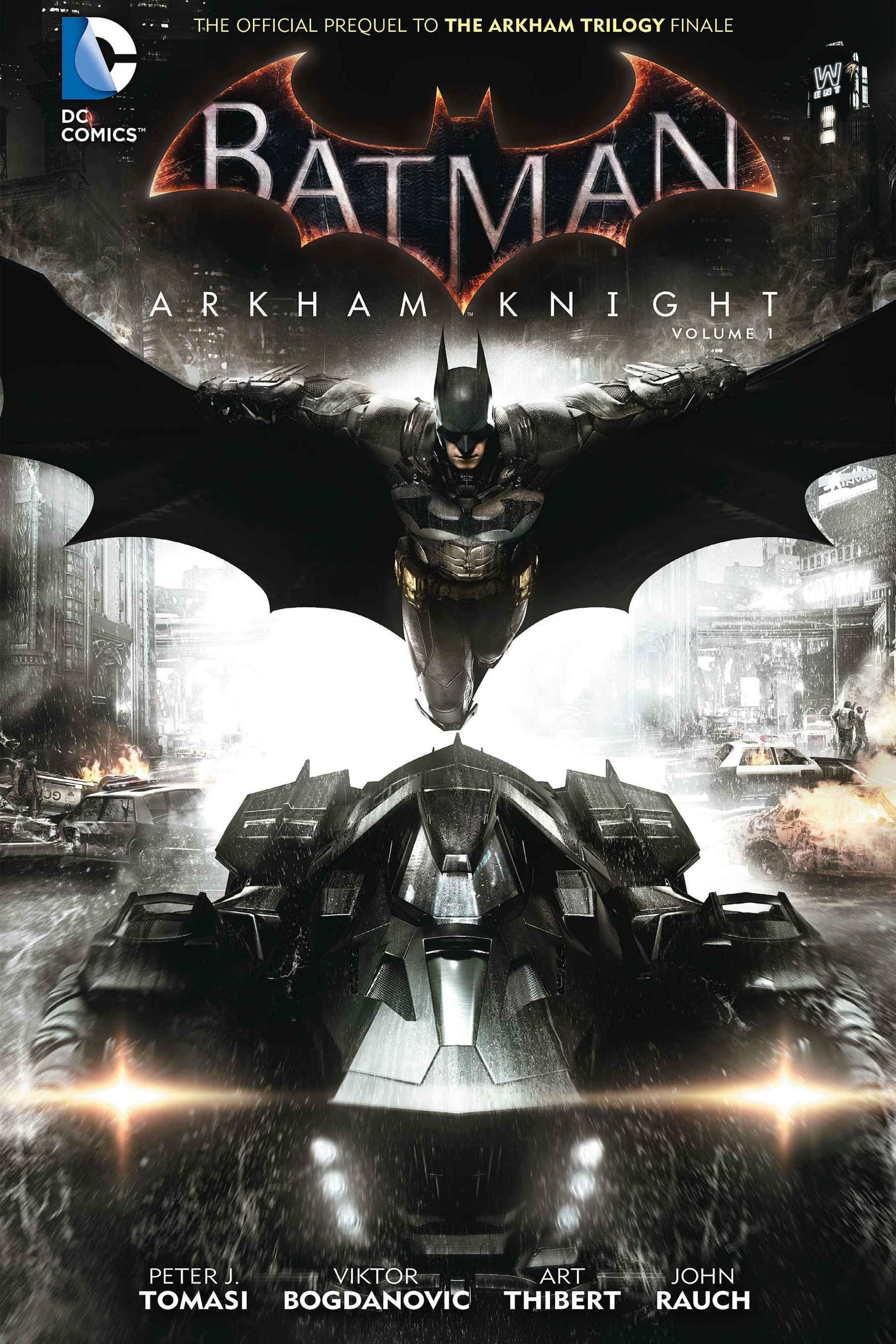
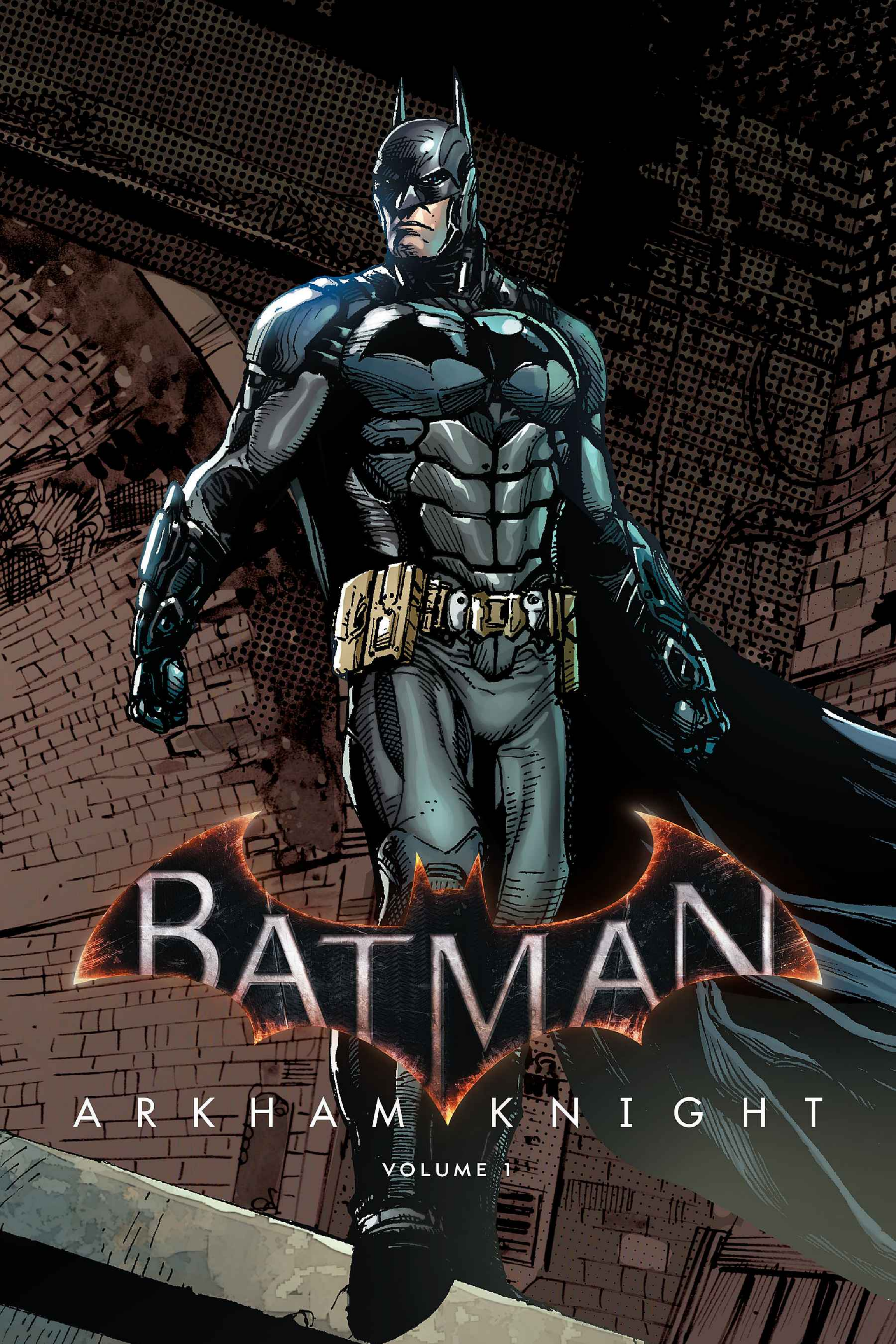
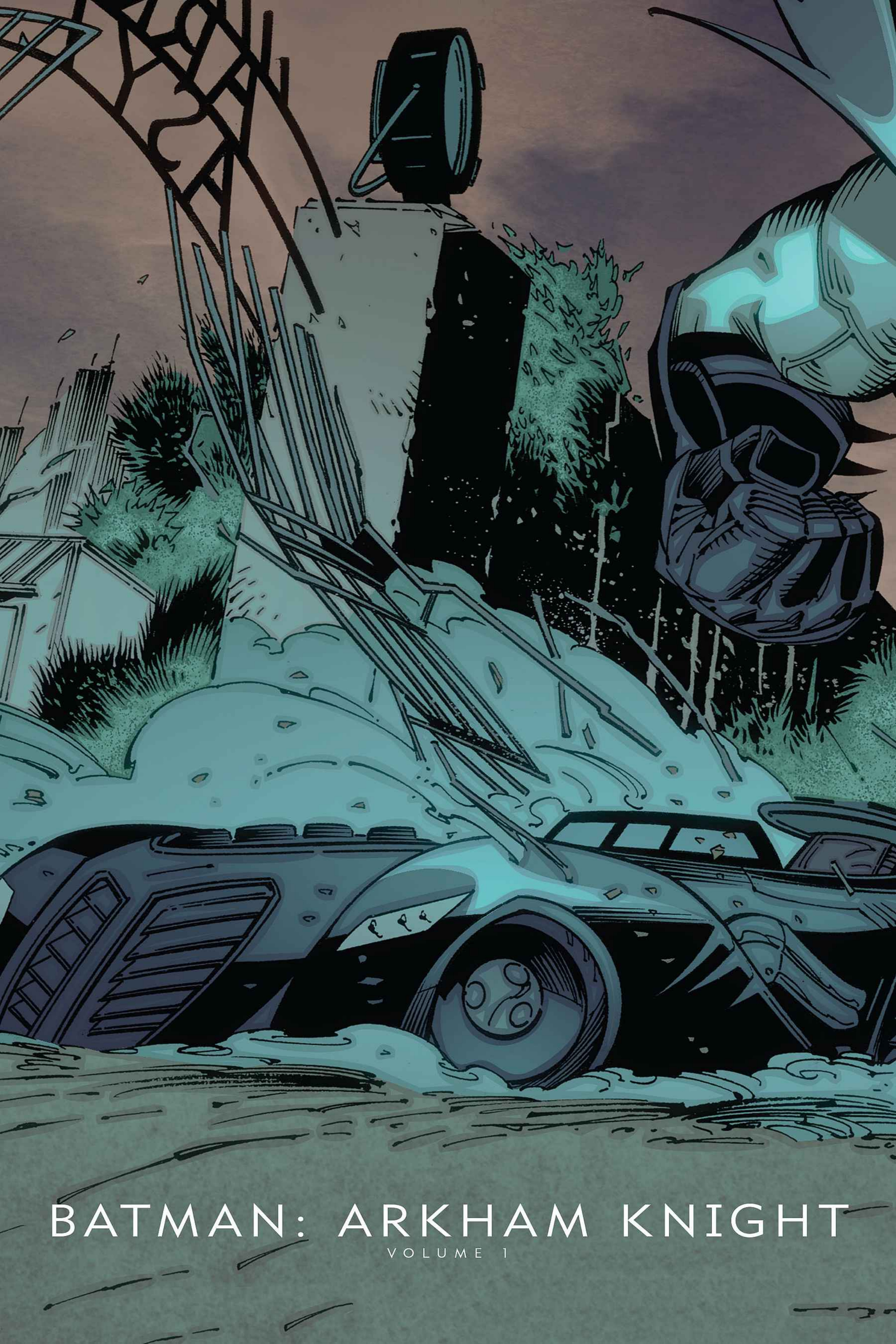

THE OFFICIAL PREQUEL TO THE ARKHAM TRILOGY FINALE
DC COMICS
BATMAN
ARKHAM KNIGHT
VOLUME 1
PETER J. TOMASI
VIKTOR BOGDANOVIC
ART THIBERT
JOHN RAUCH

# BATMAN

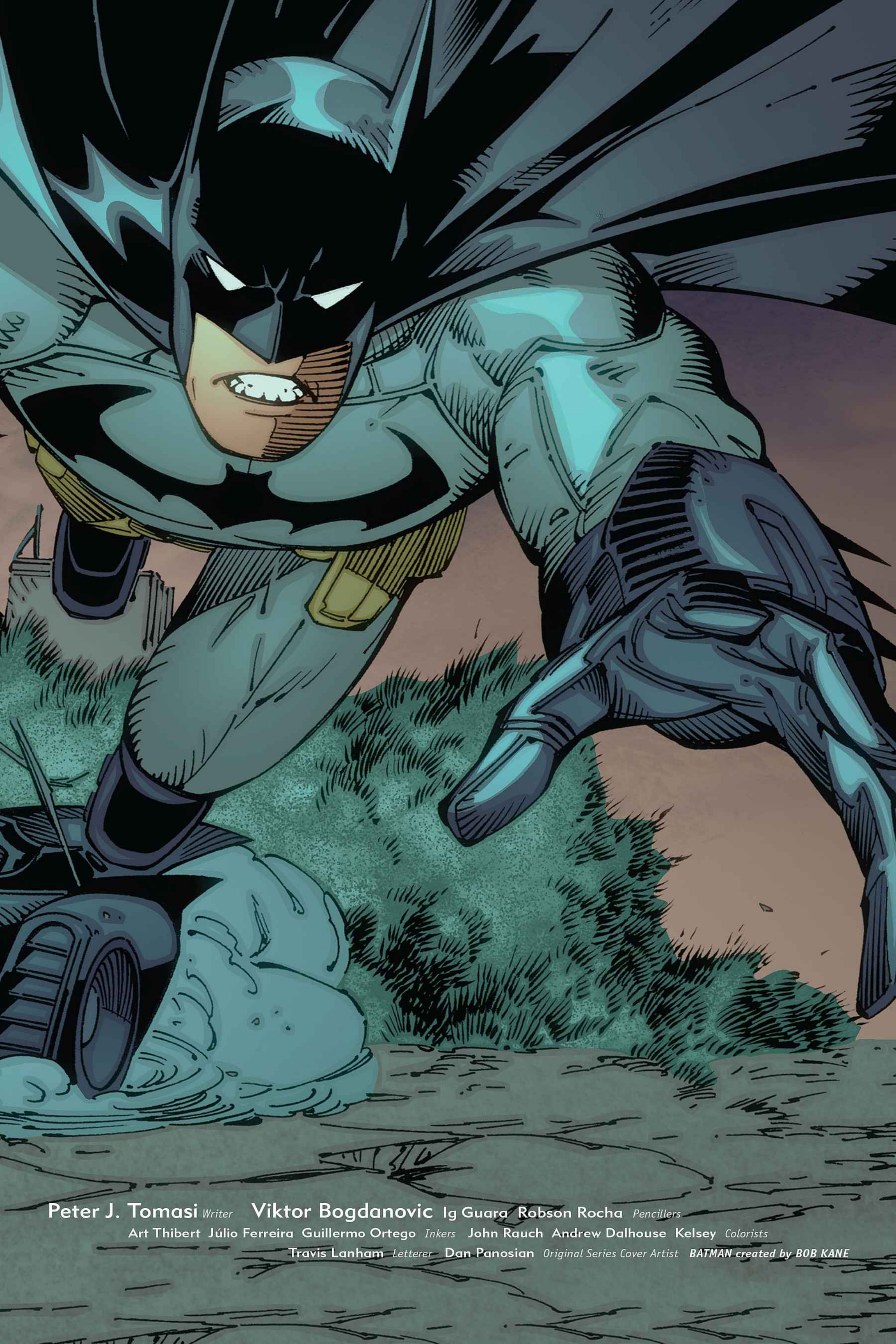
## ARKHAM™ KNIGHT


BATMAN
ARKHAM KNIGHT
VOLUME 1



# BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT

VOLUME 1



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**Travis Lanham** *Letterer* **Dan Panosian** *Original Series Cover Artist* ***BATMAN created by BOB KANE***

**BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT**



DC Comics, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522
A Warner Bros. Entertainment Company.




GOTHAM
REGENT
PANOSIAN

**BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT #1**
*variant cover by*
***Gary Frank and Rod Reis.***




MONARCH THEATRE
JOKER THE IMMORTAL
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED IN THERE?
SLAMM
GCPD
BATMAN! WHAT HAPPENED?!
POLICE
WE NEED A BODYBAG AND A FREEZER TRUCK--NOW!
ALL UNITS! EMERGENCY ACTION AT MONARCH THEATRE.
COMMISSIONER! YOU GOTTA SEE INSIDE!
WE FOUND OFFICER CASH! SEND BACKUP TO THE CATHEDRAL!



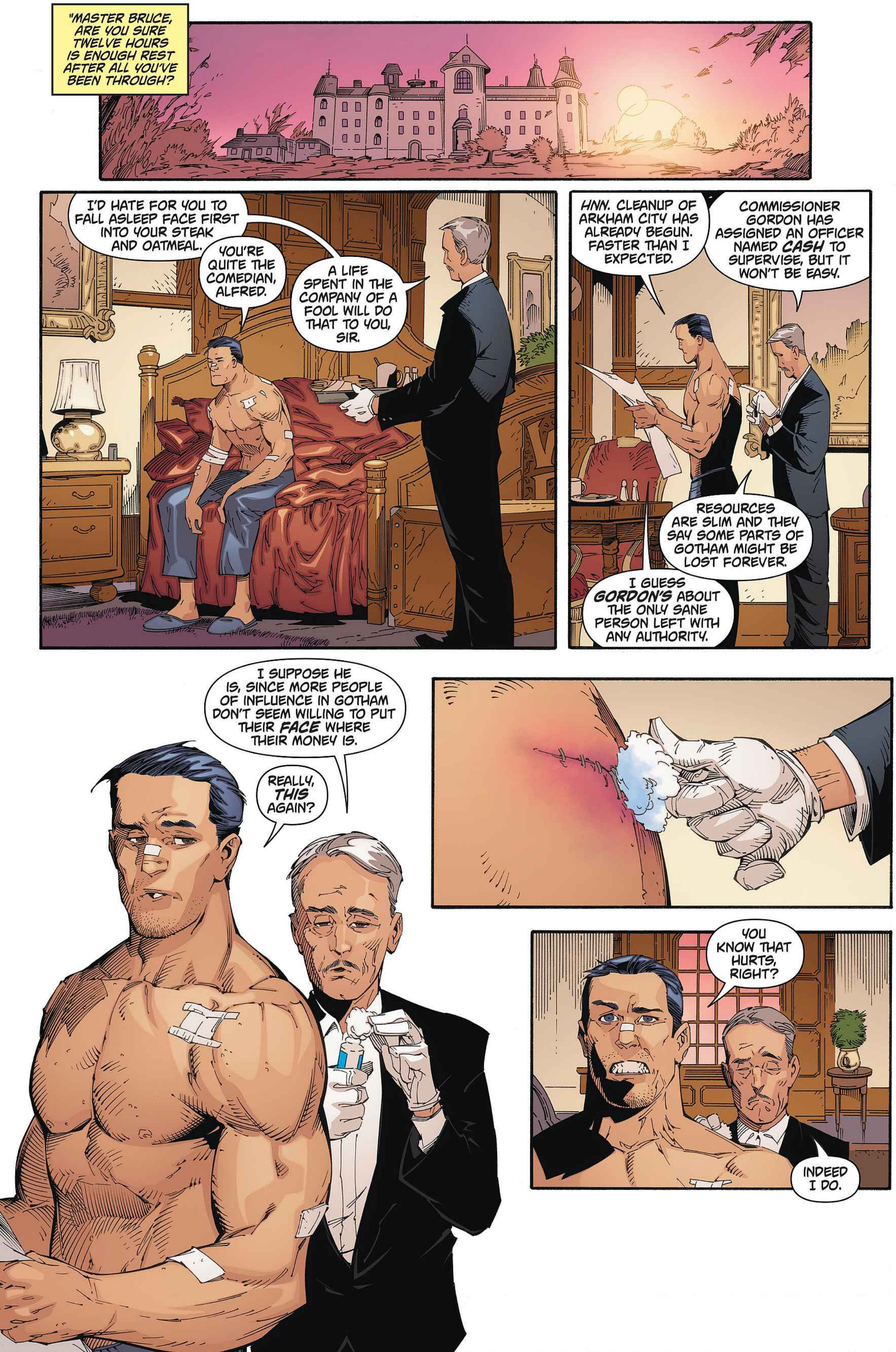
I'M HEADING HOME, ALFRED.
ARKHAM CITY IS CLOSED.
GOTHAM CASINO
HOTEL
ACE
BAR
EXCELLENT NEWS, SIR.
WHAT TIME IS SUNRISE?
APPROXIMATELY TWENTY MINUTES, SO YOU CAN FINALLY--
--GET SOME REST.
RARRGH!
KZZAK
WELL, WHAT DO YA KNOW, CHRISTMAS IS FREAKIN' EARLY-- GIFTS ARE FALLIN' FROM THE SKY.
FWAMM
ELECTROCUTIONER? BUT YOU'RE--

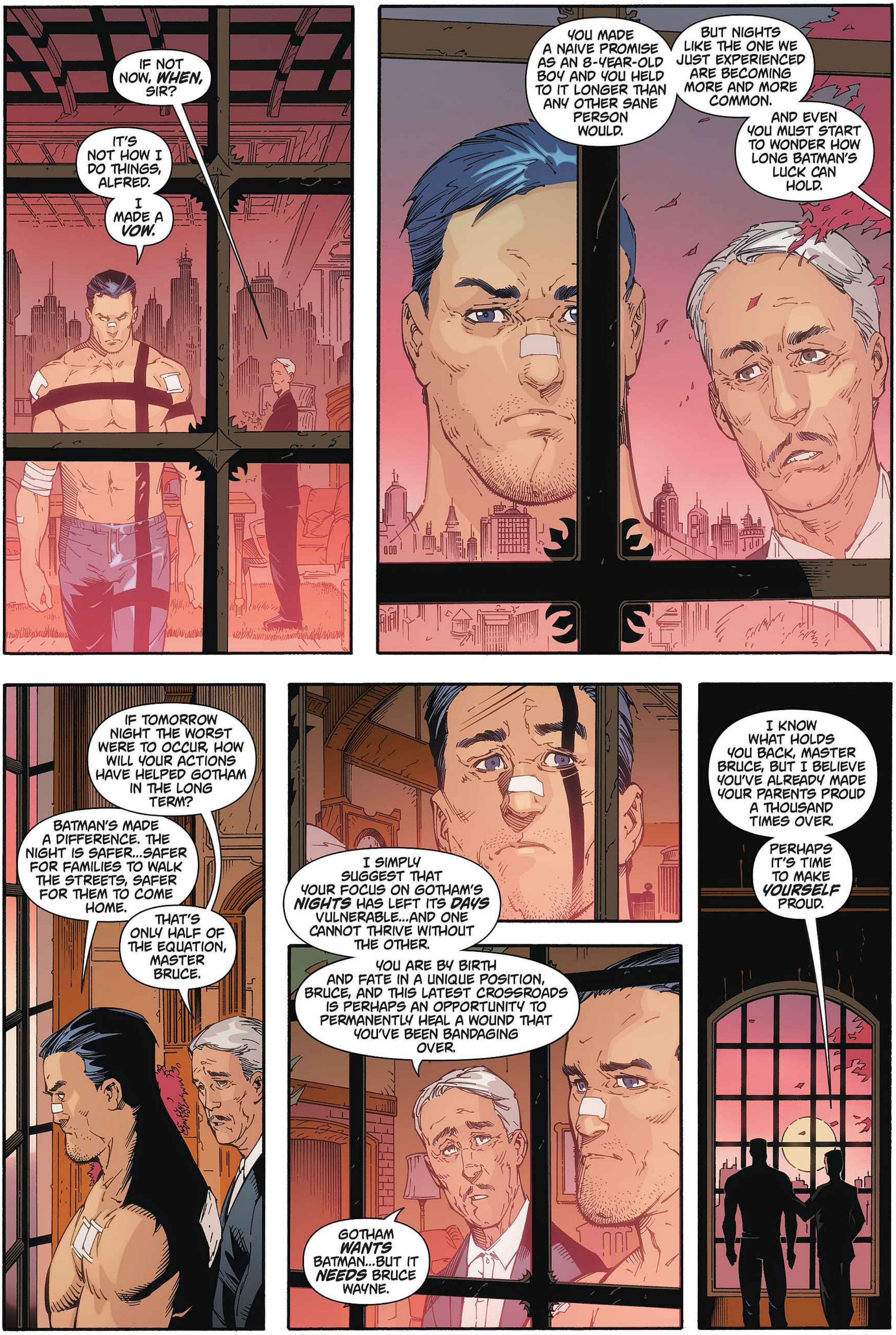

DEAD? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE GONNA WHINE?
THAT WAS MY BOSS, BAT-ASS. YOU TOOK HIM OUT A FEW YEARS BACK AND STOLE HIS GLOVES RIGHT OFF THE CORPSE!
EVEN YOU GOTTA AGREE THAT AIN'T RIGHT!
ZZRAAAKK
LUCKILY SOME OF US AIN'T AS STUPID AS WE LOOK. I PAID ATTENTION TO THE BOSS. AND I KNEW WHERE HE KEPT HIS--WHADDAYACALLEM--PROTOTYPES.
AND I KNEW JUST HOW TO MAKE ONE OF THOSE WAYNE INDUSTRY GEEKS TWEAK IT ALL UP FOR ME--
--JUST BEFORE I TESTED MY NEW GLOVES ON HIS SURPRISED LITTLE HEAD.
ZZRAKKK
SO NOW I'M THE ALL-NEW, ALL-IMPROVED ELECTROCUTIONER!
DON'T SCIENCE KICK ASS?!
ZZZRAPPP
AARGH!


YOU'VE GOT THE EXACT SAME PROBLEM AS YOUR OLD BOSS...
SKKKKRKK
KRAKK
--ST-ST-STOP--
...YOU TALK TOO MUCH.
KRREESSH


HRRN.
ORACLE.
BATMAN! THERE YOU ARE! I'VE BEEN HELPING COORDINATE FOR MY DAD BECAUSE EVERY REMAINING COP IS BUSY BOOKING THE SCUZZBALLS YOU LEFT ALL OVER AC.
LIKE USUAL, IT SEEMS LIKE THE CITY'S STARTING TO QUIET DOWN JUST IN TIME FOR SUNRISE.
NOT QUIET ENOUGH. TELL YOUR FATHER HE'S GOT ONE MORE SCUZZBALL WAITING FOR HIM ON TOP OF THE OLD SEFTON-HILL BUILDING.
TELL HIM TO BRING A WARM BLANKET AND A DENTIST WITH HIM.
WE'LL TALK LATER.
...NNN... NNN...
LOOK AT ME.


THE BAT HAS WON THIS NIGHT ACROSS GOTHAM AS HE HAS SO MANY OTHERS BY KNOWING HOW TO USE FEAR.
HE LEAVES YOU ALIVE AND TOO SCARED TO MOVE-- TOO FRIGHTENED TO BREATHE HIS NAME.
IT'S HIS GREATEST POWER.
BUT SOON HE'LL FACE AN ENEMY HE CAN'T FRIGHTEN.
SOMEONE THAT KNOWS HIM TOO WELL TO HIDE FROM THE OBVIOUS, BROKEN MAN HE'S BECOME.
...NO...
AND AS I STRIKE, MEN LIKE YOU WILL BELIEVE WE ARE ON THE SAME SIDE.
BUT YOU'LL BE WRONG.
BECAUSE *I* KNOW JUST HOW MEANINGLESS THE REST OF *YOUR* LIVES REALLY ARE TO THIS WHOLE STORY.
--PUH- PLEASE--
BLAMM
THAT IS *MY* POWER.


"MASTER BRUCE, ARE YOU SURE TWELVE HOURS IS ENOUGH REST AFTER ALL YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH?
I'D HATE FOR YOU TO FALL ASLEEP FACE FIRST INTO YOUR STEAK AND OATMEAL.
YOU'RE QUITE THE COMEDIAN, ALFRED.
A LIFE SPENT IN THE COMPANY OF A FOOL WILL DO THAT TO YOU, SIR.
HNN. CLEANUP OF ARKHAM CITY HAS ALREADY BEGUN. FASTER THAN I EXPECTED.
COMMISSIONER GORDON HAS ASSIGNED AN OFFICER NAMED CASH TO SUPERVISE, BUT IT WON'T BE EASY.
RESOURCES ARE SLIM AND THEY SAY SOME PARTS OF GOTHAM MIGHT BE LOST FOREVER.
I GUESS GORDON'S ABOUT THE ONLY SANE PERSON LEFT WITH ANY AUTHORITY.
I SUPPOSE HE IS, SINCE MORE PEOPLE OF INFLUENCE IN GOTHAM DON'T SEEM WILLING TO PUT THEIR FACE WHERE THEIR MONEY IS.
REALLY, THIS AGAIN?
YOU KNOW THAT HURTS, RIGHT?
INDEED I DO.


IF NOT NOW, WHEN, SIR?
IT'S NOT HOW I DO THINGS, ALFRED.
I MADE A VOW.
YOU MADE A NAIVE PROMISE AS AN 8-YEAR-OLD BOY AND YOU HELD TO IT LONGER THAN ANY OTHER SANE PERSON WOULD.
BUT NIGHTS LIKE THE ONE WE JUST EXPERIENCED ARE BECOMING MORE AND MORE COMMON.
AND EVEN YOU MUST START TO WONDER HOW LONG BATMAN'S LUCK CAN HOLD.
IF TOMORROW NIGHT THE WORST WERE TO OCCUR, HOW WILL YOUR ACTIONS HAVE HELPED GOTHAM IN THE LONG TERM?
BATMAN'S MADE A DIFFERENCE. THE NIGHT IS SAFER...SAFER FOR FAMILIES TO WALK THE STREETS, SAFER FOR THEM TO COME HOME.
THAT'S ONLY HALF OF THE EQUATION, MASTER BRUCE.
I SIMPLY SUGGEST THAT YOUR FOCUS ON GOTHAM'S NIGHTS HAS LEFT ITS DAYS VULNERABLE...AND ONE CANNOT THRIVE WITHOUT THE OTHER.
YOU ARE BY BIRTH AND FATE IN A UNIQUE POSITION, BRUCE, AND THIS LATEST CROSSROADS IS PERHAPS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PERMANENTLY HEAL A WOUND THAT YOU'VE BEEN BANDAGING OVER.
GOTHAM WANTS BATMAN...BUT IT NEEDS BRUCE WAYNE.
I KNOW WHAT HOLDS YOU BACK, MASTER BRUCE, BUT I BELIEVE YOU'VE ALREADY MADE YOUR PARENTS PROUD A THOUSAND TIMES OVER.
PERHAPS IT'S TIME TO MAKE YOURSELF PROUD.


GOTHAM CITY MORGUE
CAN WE JUST COVER THE FACE, PLEASE?
PAUL, PLEASE MAINTAIN YOUR COMPOSURE AND PROFESSIONALISM.
IT'S FREAKING ME OUT.
COMMENCING A Y-SHAPED INCISION OVER THE BREASTPLATE...
NOTE: VICTIM'S SKIN IS CHARRED AND FLAKY.
CORRECTION. VICTIM HAS A SECONDARY, DECAYING LAYER OF DERMAL COVERAGE BONDED TO HIS ACTUAL--
--HOLY CRAP--HE'S GOT A FAKE LAYER OF SKIN!
ARTIFICIAL DERMAL LAYER HAS PEELED AWAY REVEALING...A FLASH DRIVE?
HA HA HA HA
IT'S MAKING A SOUND!


DAMMIT, PAUL, DON'T TOUCH--
WE SHOULD CALL IN THE SWAT GUYS AND--
FSSSSH
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HA
HA HA
HA HA HA HA
HA HA
DO NOT OPEN 'TIL X-MAS!!
HA HA HA HA


ARKHAM CITY.
SEVERAL NIGHTS AFTER THE DEATH OF THE JOKER.
AS MUCH AS I HATE TO INTRUDE, SIR, IT IS ALMOST 4:30 A.M. AND YOUR BETTER HALF DOES HAVE BUSINESS MEETINGS STARTING AT 8:00 A.M.
AN HOUR OR TWO OF SLEEP WOULD NOT BE ADVERSE FOR A CREATURE OF THE NIGHT.
I'LL SLEEP WHEN I'M DEAD, ALFRED.
DEE!
WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE US ALONE?!
AND WHY ARE YOU CALLING US ALFRED?!?!
BECAUSE I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO CALL A GROWN MAN "TWEEDLE DUM."
T-CHOK
GYAHH!

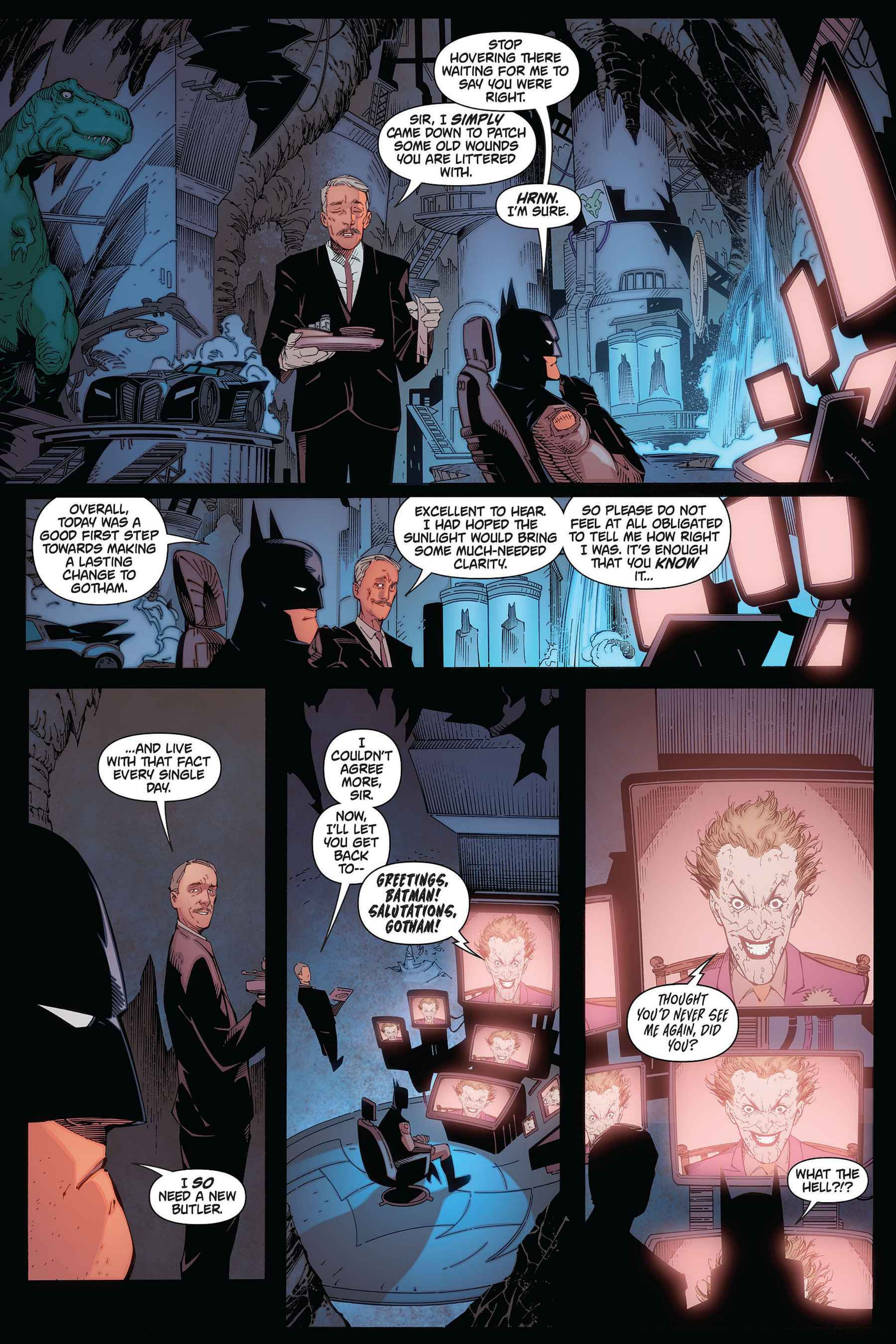

WHAMM
ALL RIGHT. YOU WIN. I'M DONE FOR THE NIGHT.
GIVEN TODAY'S SCHEDULE, I'M DELIGHTED TO HEAR THAT.
NOW MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE EDIFICE...
VRRMM
...WHERE YOU WILL FIND THE CAR...
VRRROOM
...AWAITING YOUR BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL DISPOSITION.
VROOM

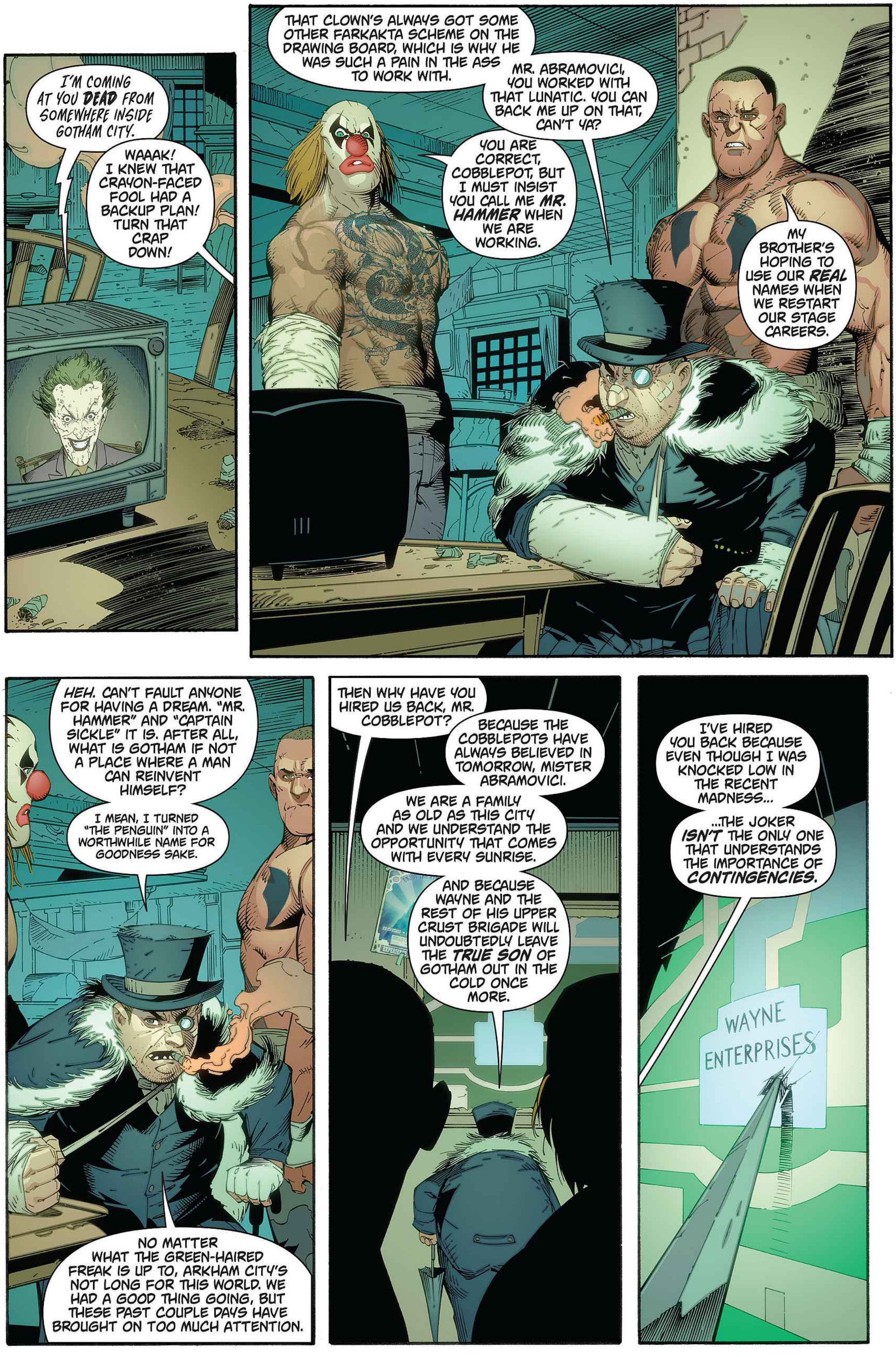

WAYNE TOWER.
WAYNE
ALL OF US IN THIS ROOM ARE THE PEOPLE IN GOTHAM THAT CAN ACTUALLY GET THINGS DONE.
WE ARE THE PEOPLE THAT WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR AND I THINK IT'S TIME WE ROSE TO OUR OCCASION.
OF COURSE, SOME OF US IN THIS ROOM ARE THE FINANCIAL RESOURCE THAT THE MORE POLITICALLY MINDED TURN TO EVERY FOUR YEARS WHEN IT'S TIME FOR RE-ELECTION.
AND OTHERS OF US HAVE THE POLITICAL POSITION TO AFFECT CHANGE, BUT LACK THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES THAT TURN THE DIFFICULT INTO THE POSSIBLE.
WE CURRENTLY HAVE A HOLE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY WHERE OUR EX-MAYOR PLACED THE CITY'S WORST DENIZENS.
AGAINST ALL LOGIC, HE SACRIFICED THE SAFETY AND INTEGRITY OF GOTHAM AND PUT OUR CITY IN THE HANDS OF A PRIVATELY FUNDED ARMY.
AN ARMY THAT QUICKLY FELL OUT OF HIS CONTROL AND ALLOWED THE VILLAINS TO SEIZE THEIR DAY.


AS YOU ALL KNOW...
"...I WAS TRAPPED THERE MYSELF AND IT..."
...IT WAS AN EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE.
I SAW BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN LIKE OFFICER AARON CASH HERE CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR SOMETHING SO MANY OF US HAD HOPED TO SEE BRUSHED UNDER THE RUG.
WE SQUANDERED NOT ONLY PART OF A CITY, BUT THE PEOPLE THAT MAKE UP THAT CITY. EMERGENCY WORKERS, COPS, FIREMEN.
WE LOSE TOO MANY PEOPLE WHO RUN TOWARDS INNOCENTS IN DANGER AND NOT AWAY FROM IT.
THE SOUL OF GOTHAM CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO LOSE THESE BRAVE CITIZENS.
WITH THE HELP OF MY TRUSTED ADVISOR AND COMPANY PRESIDENT, LUCIUS FOX, I HAVE PUT TOGETHER A PLAN TO PUT THE FULL FINANCIAL FORCE OF THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BEHIND A MOVEMENT TO CHANGE THIS CITY ONCE AND FOR ALL.
AND I HOPE ALL OF GOTHAM'S LEADERS IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER JOIN ME.
AS OVERLY DRAMATIC A GESTURE AS THIS IS, WE NEED AN EVEN MORE DRAMATIC INVESTMENT OF HEARTS AND MINDS.
IT'S TIME TO LET THE SUN IN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.
IT'S TIME TO BUILD A FUTURE.



YOU LOOK TIRED.
THAT WAS A 10-HOUR MEETING WITH ACTUAL PEOPLE, LUCIUS.
TRUE, USUALLY YOU PAY ME THE BIG BUCKS FOR THAT.
I'D SAY WE DID PRETTY WELL CONSIDERING THE CITY HAS NO REAL MAYOR. THE DEPUTY MAYOR IS THE LEAST DECISIVE PERSON I'VE EVER SEEN.
HELL, HE EVEN ATE ONE OF EVERY TYPE OF SANDWICH YOU ORDERED FOR LUNCH JUST TO BE SAFE.
I NOTICED.
BUT WE MOVED THE BALL A LITTLE DOWN THE FIELD, LUCIUS. JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES AND ALL THAT...
WELL, IT'S A JOURNEY YOU STARTED WHEN YOU TOSSED THE JOKER'S BODY ON THE HOOD OF THAT COP CAR, BRUCE.
IT'S HOPEFULLY THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF ALL THAT'S INFECTED THIS CITY.
I CAN'T LET MYSELF THINK THAT WAY THIS EARLY IN THE GAME, LUCIUS.
DO ME A FAVOR AND CALL COMMISSIONER GORDON. I'M DISAPPOINTED HE DIDN'T COME TODAY.
WELL, IT'S NOT IN JIM'S NATURE TO BE SEEN WITH THE LIKES OF US.
TO HIM WE'RE PART OF THE PROBLEM.
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF.
SEE YOU TOMORROW, LUCIUS.


STOP HOVERING THERE WAITING FOR ME TO SAY YOU WERE RIGHT.
SIR, I SIMPLY CAME DOWN TO PATCH SOME OLD WOUNDS YOU ARE LITTERED WITH.
HRNN. I'M SURE.
OVERALL, TODAY WAS A GOOD FIRST STEP TOWARDS MAKING A LASTING CHANGE TO GOTHAM.
EXCELLENT TO HEAR. I HAD HOPED THE SUNLIGHT WOULD BRING SOME MUCH-NEEDED CLARITY.
SO PLEASE DO NOT FEEL AT ALL OBLIGATED TO TELL ME HOW RIGHT I WAS. IT'S ENOUGH THAT YOU KNOW IT...
...AND LIVE WITH THAT FACT EVERY SINGLE DAY.
I SO NEED A NEW BUTLER.
I COULDN'T AGREE MORE, SIR.
NOW, I'LL LET YOU GET BACK TO--
GREETINGS, BATMAN! SALUTATIONS, GOTHAM!
THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER SEE ME AGAIN, DID YOU?
WHAT THE HELL?!?


I'M COMING AT YOU DEAD FROM SOMEWHERE INSIDE GOTHAM CITY.
WAAAK! I KNEW THAT CRAYON-FACED FOOL HAD A BACKUP PLAN! TURN THAT CRAP DOWN!
THAT CLOWN'S ALWAYS GOT SOME OTHER FARKAKTA SCHEME ON THE DRAWING BOARD, WHICH IS WHY HE WAS SUCH A PAIN IN THE ASS TO WORK WITH.
MR. ABRAMOVICI, YOU WORKED WITH THAT LUNATIC. YOU CAN BACK ME UP ON THAT, CAN'T YA?
YOU ARE CORRECT, COBBLEPOT, BUT I MUST INSIST YOU CALL ME MR. HAMMER WHEN WE ARE WORKING.
MY BROTHER'S HOPING TO USE OUR REAL NAMES WHEN WE RESTART OUR STAGE CAREERS.
HEH. CAN'T FAULT ANYONE FOR HAVING A DREAM. "MR. HAMMER" AND "CAPTAIN SICKLE" IT IS. AFTER ALL, WHAT IS GOTHAM IF NOT A PLACE WHERE A MAN CAN REINVENT HIMSELF?
I MEAN, I TURNED "THE PENGUIN" INTO A WORTHWHILE NAME FOR GOODNESS SAKE.
NO MATTER WHAT THE GREEN-HAIRED FREAK IS UP TO, ARKHAM CITY'S NOT LONG FOR THIS WORLD. WE HAD A GOOD THING GOING, BUT THESE PAST COUPLE DAYS HAVE BROUGHT ON TOO MUCH ATTENTION.
THEN WHY HAVE YOU HIRED US BACK, MR. COBBLEPOT?
BECAUSE THE COBBLEPOTS HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED IN TOMORROW, MISTER ABRAMOVICI.
WE ARE A FAMILY AS OLD AS THIS CITY AND WE UNDERSTAND THE OPPORTUNITY THAT COMES WITH EVERY SUNRISE.
AND BECAUSE WAYNE AND THE REST OF HIS UPPER CRUST BRIGADE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY LEAVE THE TRUE SON OF GOTHAM OUT IN THE COLD ONCE MORE.
I'VE HIRED YOU BACK BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH I WAS KNOCKED LOW IN THE RECENT MADNESS...
...THE JOKER ISN'T THE ONLY ONE THAT UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINGENCIES.
WAYNE ENTERPRISES



NOW, I NEED YOU BOYS TO GO DO SOME DIGGING AND FIND OUT WHERE THE HELL JONATHAN CRANE IS HIDING HIMSELF.
NO ONE HAS SEEN HIM IN MONTHS. NOT SINCE THE EXCITEMENT LAST YEAR AT THE ASYLUM. I'M WORRIED SICK ABOUT THE POOR DEAR...
...AND IT WOULD BE SOOO NICE TO SEE THE SCARECROW ONCE AGAIN AND CALM THIS TOWN DOWN.
...THAT GIVES MY BODY TO HARLEEN QUINZEL, WILL BE REWARDED TO THE TUNE OF ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS.
LET GO OF ME!
AWW, COME ON, GLEASON! LET US MAKE YA LOOK RIGHT, SO WE CAN COLLECT THAT CASH FROM QUINZY! WE'LL GIVE YA A CUT.
WAIT, I THOUGHT YOU SAID WE WAS KILLIN' HIM FIRST?
THAT'S WHAT I MEANT BY CUT! YA RUINED MY SURPRI--
WHAMM



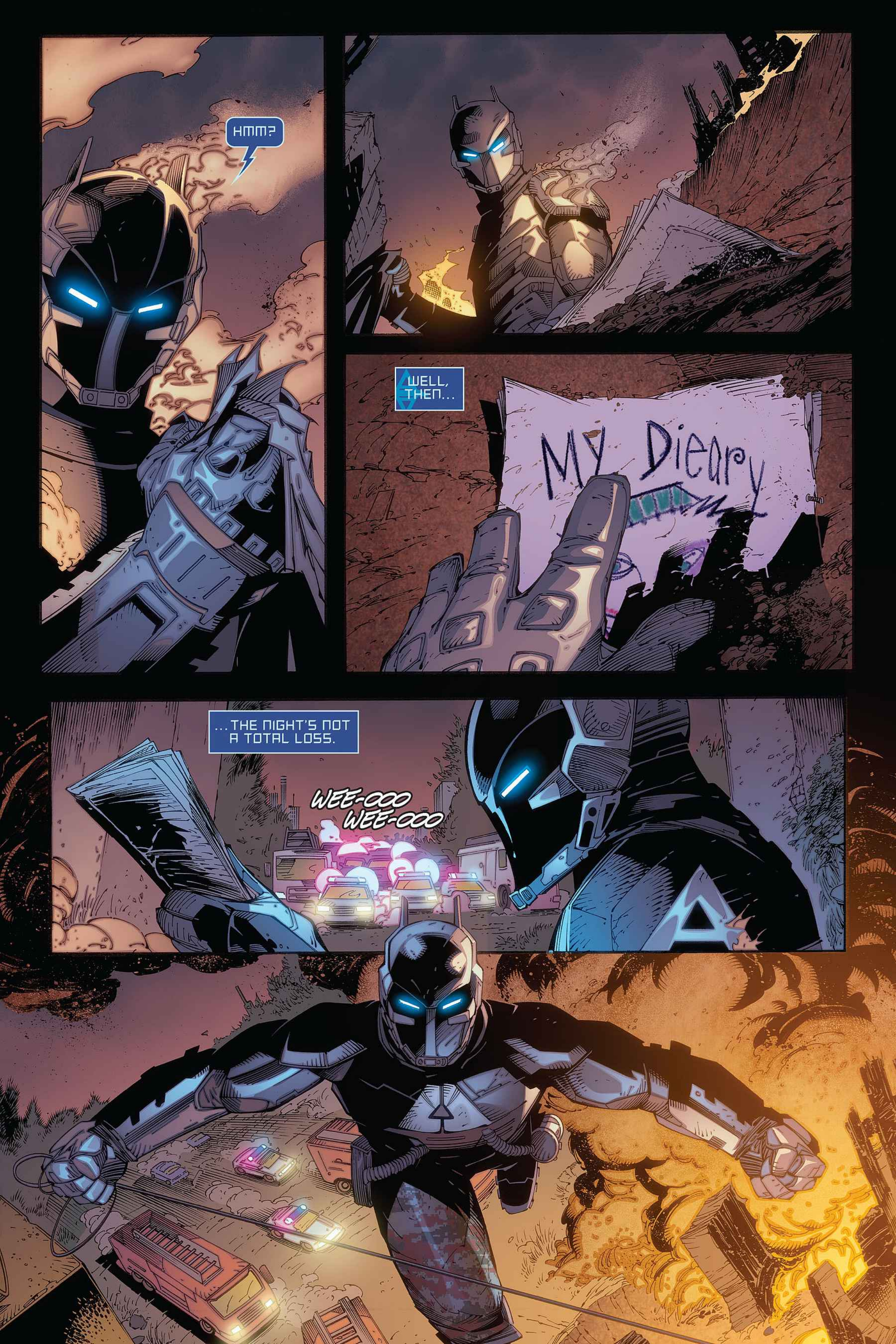
BUT WHY ARKHAM ASYLUM, BATMAN?
BECAUSE THE JOKER HAD A SEPARATE MESSAGE JUST FOR ME. HE'S PLACED BOMBS INSIDE ALL OF GOTHAM'S WALLS SET TO GO OFF IN ONE HOUR.
OKAY, I'LL GET TO WORK ON CRACKING THE SIGNAL--
NO, ORACLE-- HE'S RIGGED THEM ALL TO GO OFF IF ANY OF THEM ARE TAMPERED WITH.
I NEED YOU TO FOCUS EMERGENCY SERVICES AND STAY IN COMMUNICATION WITH NIGHTWING AND ROBIN ON THE STREETS IN CASE THE CRAZIES MAKE A PLAY FOR THE JOKER'S BODY.
I'M HEADING TO ARKHAM BECAUSE HE CLAIMS THAT SOMEWHERE INSIDE I CAN FIND THE ONE OVERRIDE CODE THAT'LL DISARM THE BOMBS COMPLETELY.
YOU'RE ASSUMING THE JOKER'S TELLING THE TRUTH.
I KNOW...
...BUT IT'S ALL I'VE GOT AT THE MOMENT.

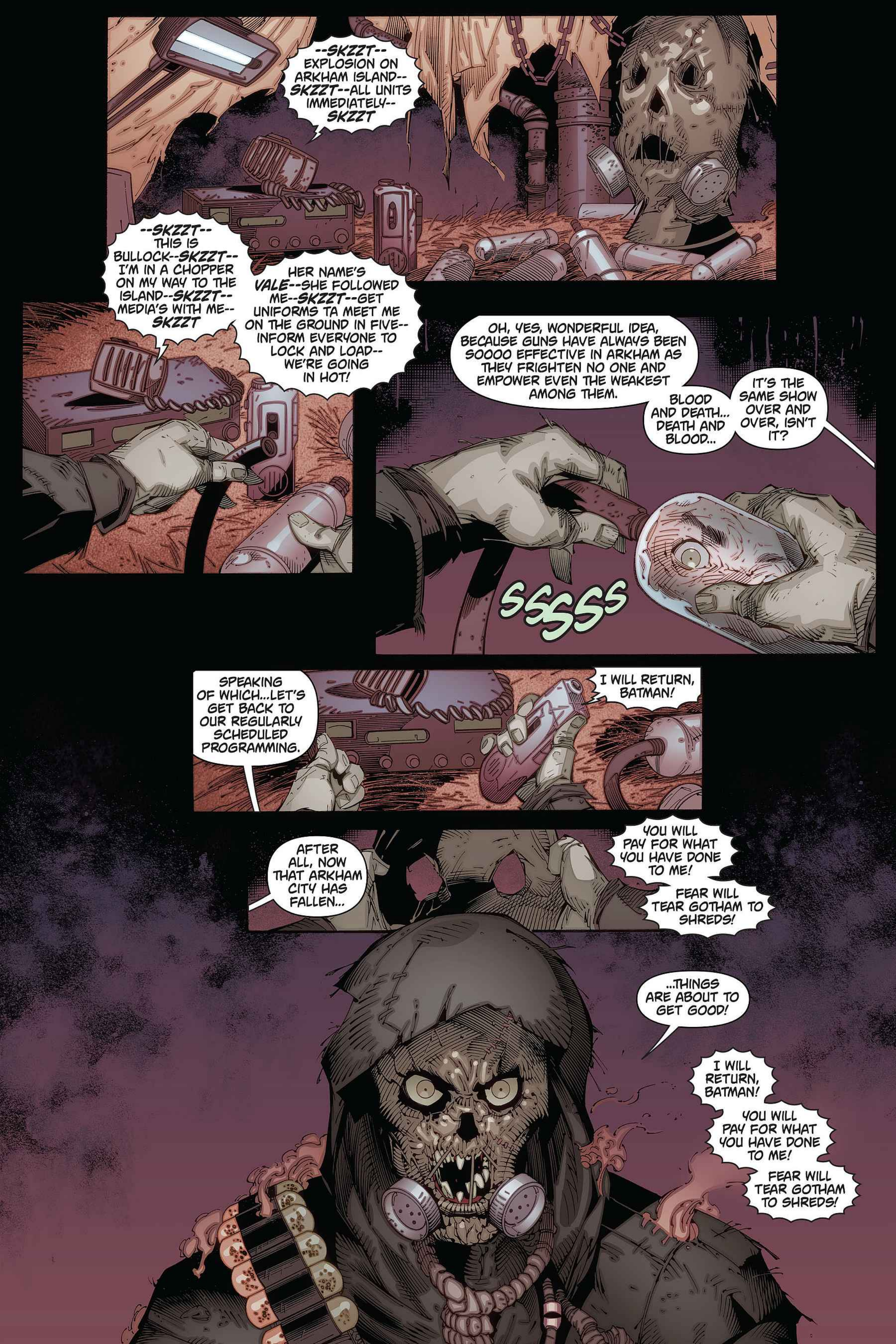

I'M GOING RADIO SILENT, ORACLE, CAN'T RISK AN ERRANT SIGNAL SETTING OFF THE EXPLOSIVES.
IF YOU DON'T HEAR FROM ME WITHIN 20 MINUTES...
...ASSUME THE WORST.
WELCOME HOME


I CAN'T WAIT TO TAKE YOU DOWN, BATMAN.
AT MY TIME.
IN MY WAY.
I JUST NEED TO MAKE SURE THE JOKER DOESN'T REACH OUT HIS COLD DEAD HAND AND GET TO YOU FIRST.
THE CLOWN GOT HIM HERE THINKING THE WALLS OF ARKHAM CITY WERE COMING DOWN.
BUT THE GOONS OF HIS I KILLED EARLIER TONIGHT TOLD A DIFFERENT STORY...
...ABOUT HOW THE JOKER GOT THE MAN MADE OUT OF CLAY TO MOVE ALL THE EXPLOSIVES TO THE ABANDONED ARKHAM ASYLUM...
...BECAUSE IT'S THE PERFECT PLACE FOR BATMAN TO DIE.
...CONCENTRATED ALL THE BOMBS IN THIS ROOM.


INCLUDING THE DOOR ITSELF...
KLANKK
THERE ARE NO CHEAT CODES AND NO EXTRA LIFE.
HRRNN...
IT'S GAME OVER.
SEE YOU IN HELL, BATSY!
HAHAHA
HA HA HAHAHA
HA HA HA HA

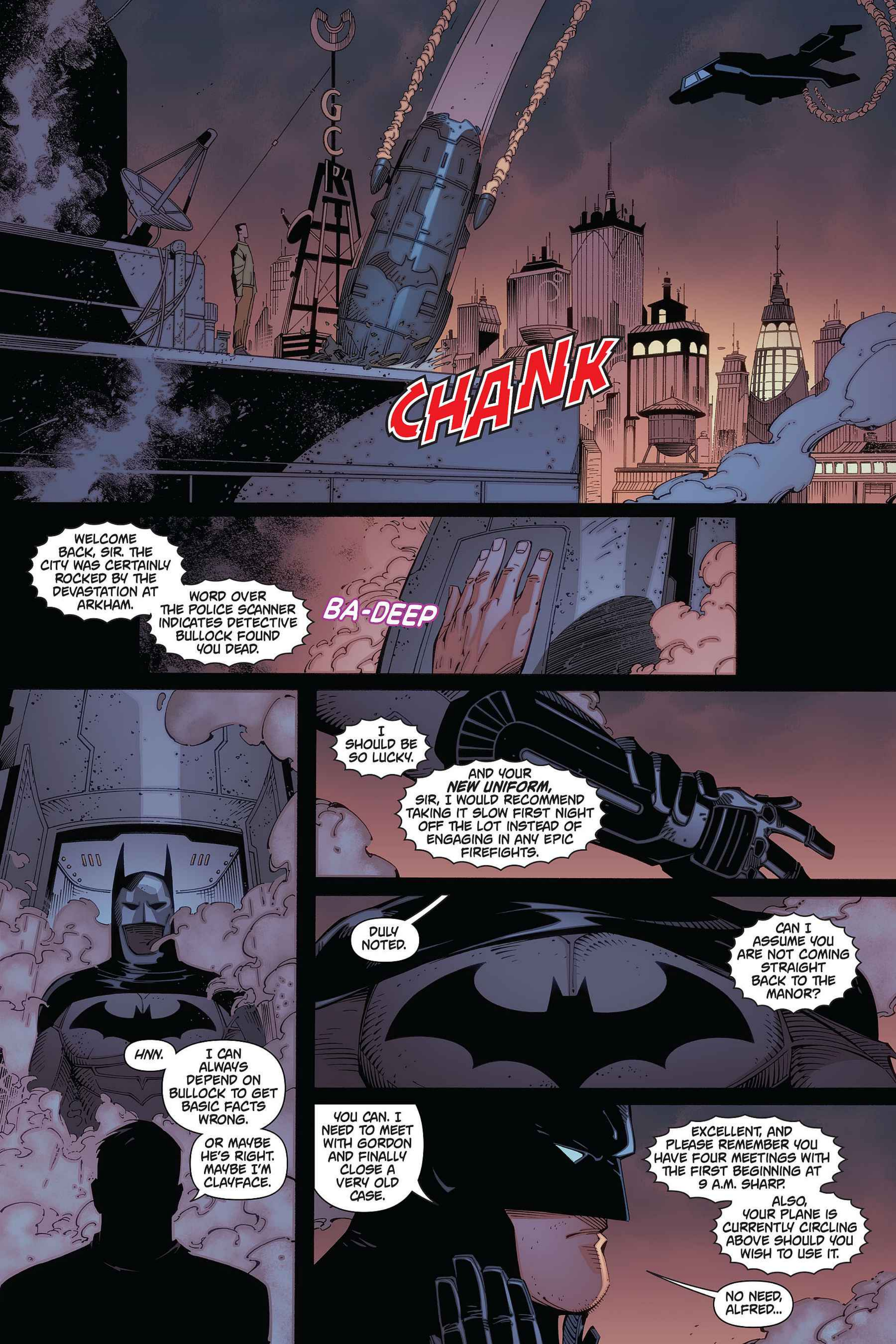

WHARROOM
KROOM
KRRKK


HMM?
WELL, THEN...
My Dieary
...THE NIGHT'S NOT A TOTAL LOSS.
WEE-OOO WEE-OOO


--SKZZT-- EXPLOSION ON ARKHAM ISLAND-- SKZZT--ALL UNITS IMMEDIATELY-- SKZZT
--SKZZT-- THIS IS BULLOCK--SKZZT-- I'M IN A CHOPPER ON MY WAY TO THE ISLAND--SKZZT-- MEDIA'S WITH ME-- SKZZT
HER NAME'S VALE--SHE FOLLOWED ME--SKZZT--GET UNIFORMS TA MEET ME ON THE GROUND IN FIVE-- INFORM EVERYONE TO LOCK AND LOAD-- WE'RE GOING IN HOT!
OH, YES, WONDERFUL IDEA, BECAUSE GUNS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SOOOO EFFECTIVE IN ARKHAM AS THEY FRIGHTEN NO ONE AND EMPOWER EVEN THE WEAKEST AMONG THEM.
BLOOD AND DEATH... DEATH AND BLOOD...
IT'S THE SAME SHOW OVER AND OVER, ISN'T IT?
SSSSS
SPEAKING OF WHICH...LET'S GET BACK TO OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING.
I WILL RETURN, BATMAN!
AFTER ALL, NOW THAT ARKHAM CITY HAS FALLEN...
YOU WILL PAY FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ME!
FEAR WILL TEAR GOTHAM TO SHREDS!
...THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET GOOD!
I WILL RETURN, BATMAN!
YOU WILL PAY FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ME!
FEAR WILL TEAR GOTHAM TO SHREDS!

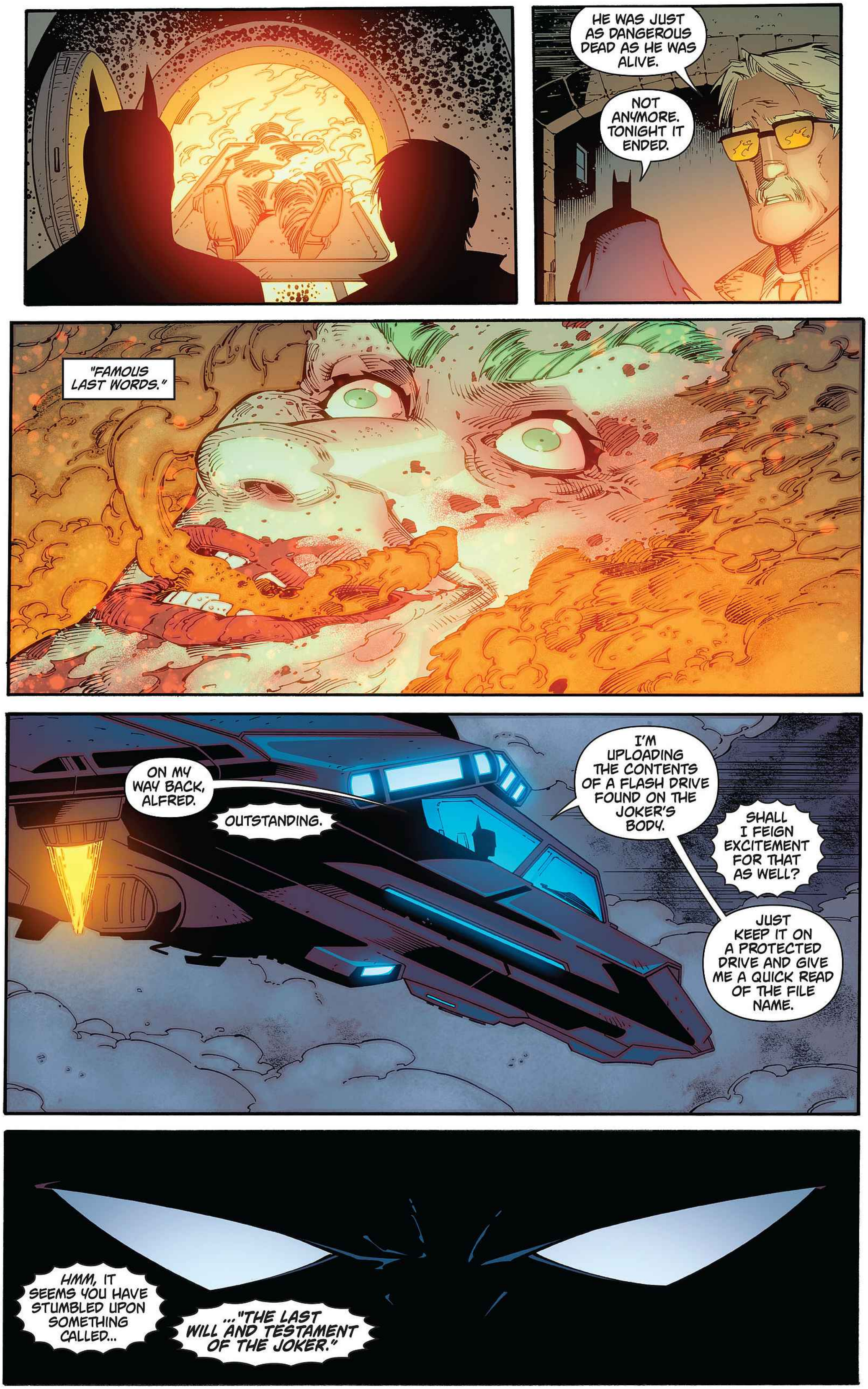

GOTHAM DOCKS.
YOU MUSTA REALLY BOUGHT A CRAPPY GPS TO GET LOST DOWN HERE, PAL.
PLEASE! STOP! I'LL GIVE YOU ANYTH--
KRAK
I DON'T NEED YOU TA GIVE ME NUTHIN'! I'M TAKIN' YOUR CAR, YOUR WALLET...
KRAK
...AND THAT PRETTY LITTLE WIFE OF YOURS I LOCKED UP IN THE TRUNK TOO.
YAAAH!
SPLSSH
...ARE YOU THE...?
YES.
YOUR PLATES ARE FROM THREE STATES AWAY, WHICH MEANS YOU PROBABLY HAVE LUGGAGE IN YOUR CAR.
I'D LIKE TO BORROW SOME CLOTHES.
OF COURSE. ANYTHING--
AFTER YOU GET YOUR WIFE OUT OF THE TRUNK, I MEAN.


BAR
THIS IS GORDON. WHO IS THIS?
PHONE
JIM, IT'S *TIME* TO MEET.
AGREED. AND IF IT'S REALLY YOU, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME.
*I HAVE HIS BODY.*
GIVE ME ONE HOUR.
OOF!
HOLD ON, BUDDY. I HAVE ONE MORE CALL TO MAKE.
CLKK
IT'S ME. I'M OKAY. JUST NEED A DROP.
LACEY TOWERS ROOF. 10 MINUTES.
GAHH!
SMASH
...UGNN...



GCR
CHANK
WELCOME BACK, SIR. THE CITY WAS CERTAINLY ROCKED BY THE DEVASTATION AT ARKHAM.
WORD OVER THE POLICE SCANNER INDICATES DETECTIVE BULLOCK FOUND YOU DEAD.
BA-DEEP
I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY.
AND YOUR NEW UNIFORM, SIR, I WOULD RECOMMEND TAKING IT SLOW FIRST NIGHT OFF THE LOT INSTEAD OF ENGAGING IN ANY EPIC FIREFIGHTS.
DULY NOTED.
CAN I ASSUME YOU ARE NOT COMING STRAIGHT BACK TO THE MANOR?
HNN.
I CAN ALWAYS DEPEND ON BULLOCK TO GET BASIC FACTS WRONG.
OR MAYBE HE'S RIGHT. MAYBE I'M CLAYFACE.
YOU CAN. I NEED TO MEET WITH GORDON AND FINALLY CLOSE A VERY OLD CASE.
EXCELLENT, AND PLEASE REMEMBER YOU HAVE FOUR MEETINGS WITH THE FIRST BEGINNING AT 9 A.M. SHARP.
ALSO, YOUR PLANE IS CURRENTLY CIRCLING ABOVE SHOULD YOU WISH TO USE IT.
NO NEED, ALFRED...

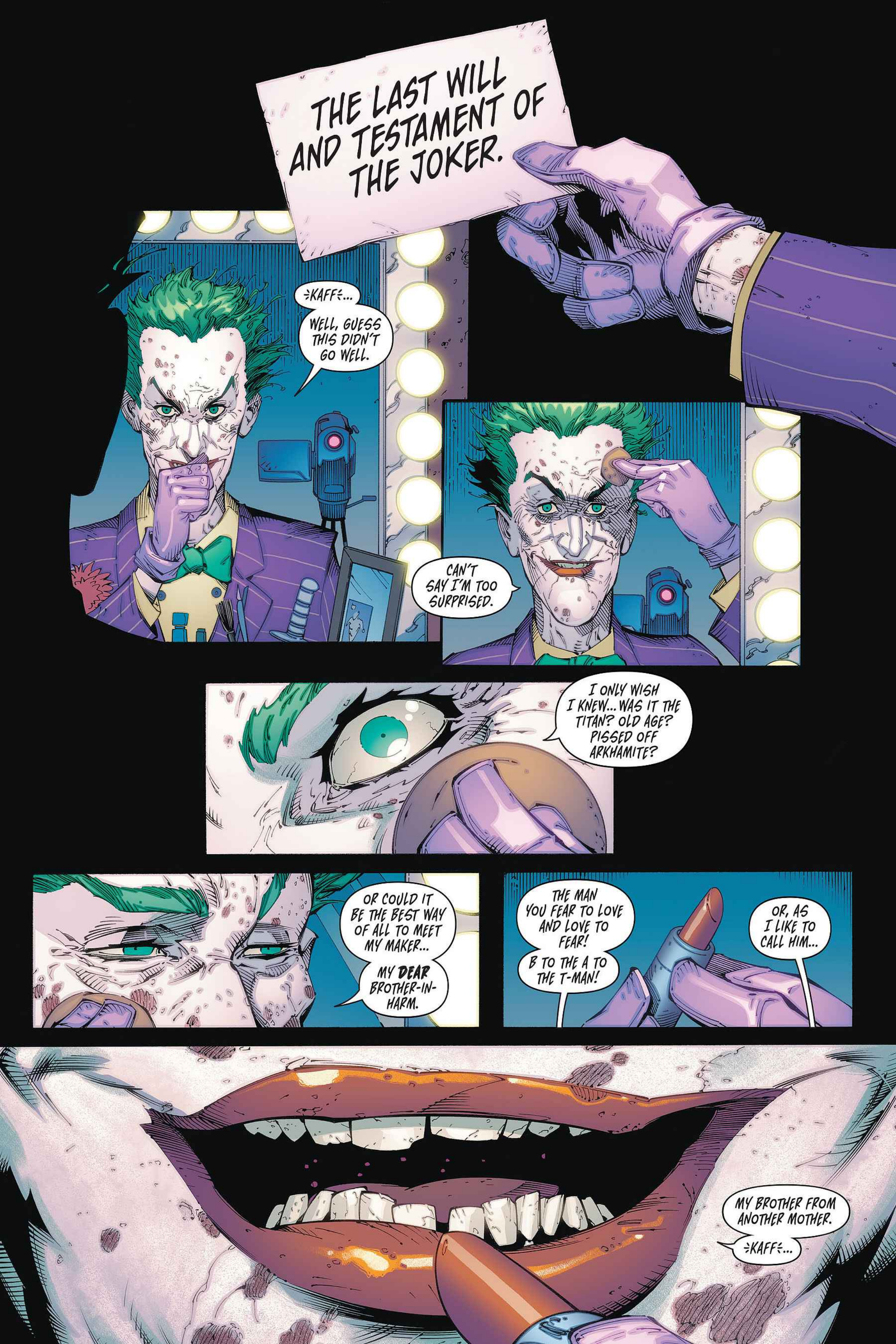

...I'LL WALK.
SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE GOTHAM CITY.
I HAD TO PULL HIM OUT OF THERE. HE WAS STILL KILLING PEOPLE FROM THE GRAVE.
THE BODY WAS BOOBY-TRAPPED?
TOOK OUT A CORONER AND HER ASSISTANT.
NOT SURE WHAT IT HOLDS SINCE I HAVEN'T BEEN NEAR A COMPUTER SINCE THEY FOUND IT.
TAKE IT AND DO WHAT YOU DO.
I'LL LET YOU KNOW IF THERE'S ANYTHING USEFUL.
I KNOW YOU WILL.
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.


HE WAS JUST AS DANGEROUS DEAD AS HE WAS ALIVE.
NOT ANYMORE. TONIGHT IT ENDED.
"FAMOUS LAST WORDS."
ON MY WAY BACK, ALFRED.
OUTSTANDING.
I'M UPLOADING THE CONTENTS OF A FLASH DRIVE FOUND ON THE JOKER'S BODY.
SHALL I FEIGN EXCITEMENT FOR THAT AS WELL?
JUST KEEP IT ON A PROTECTED DRIVE AND GIVE ME A QUICK READ OF THE FILE NAME.
HMM, IT SEEMS YOU HAVE STUMBLED UPON SOMETHING CALLED...
..."THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE JOKER."

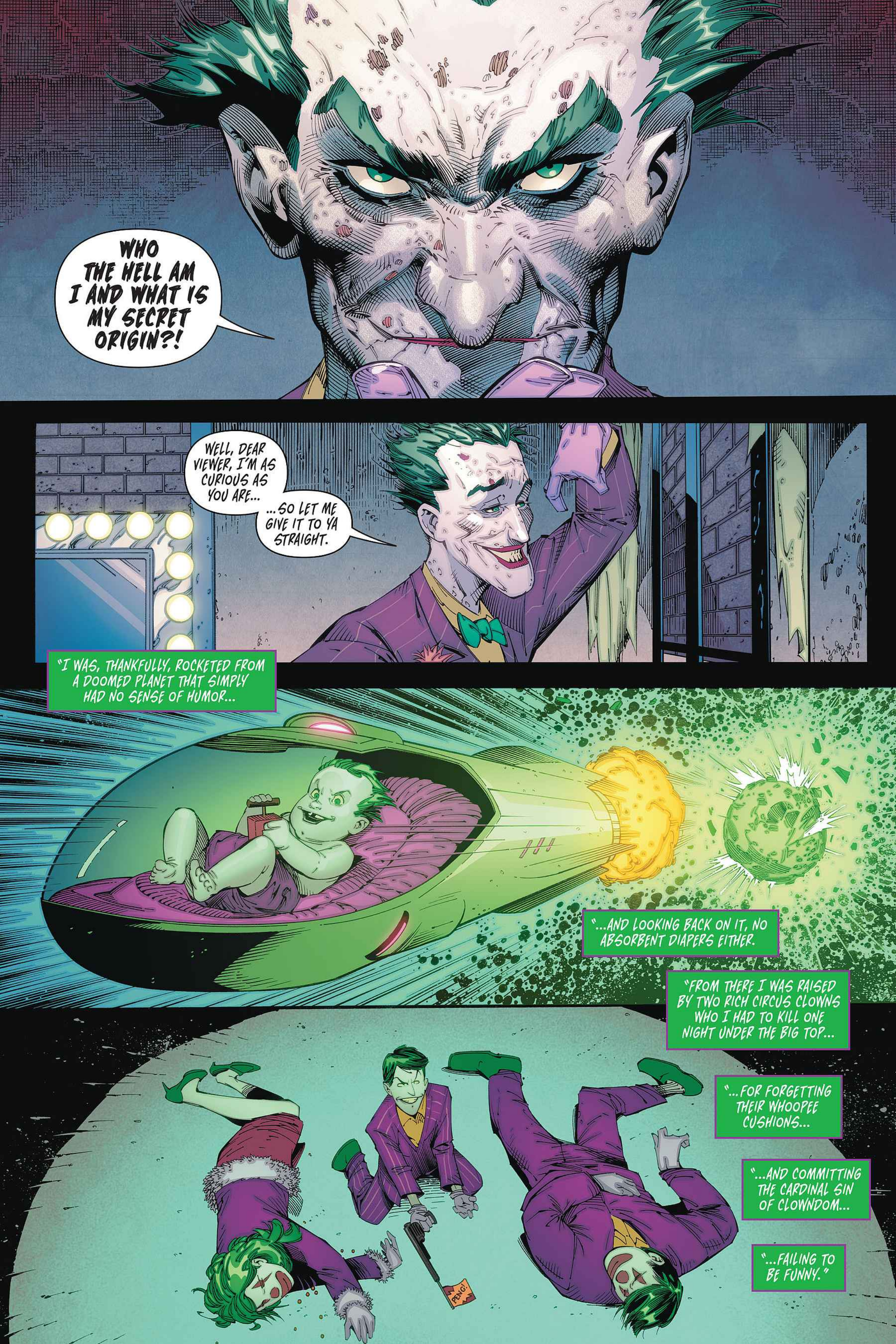

BATMAN
ARKHAM KNIGHT
PANOSIAN

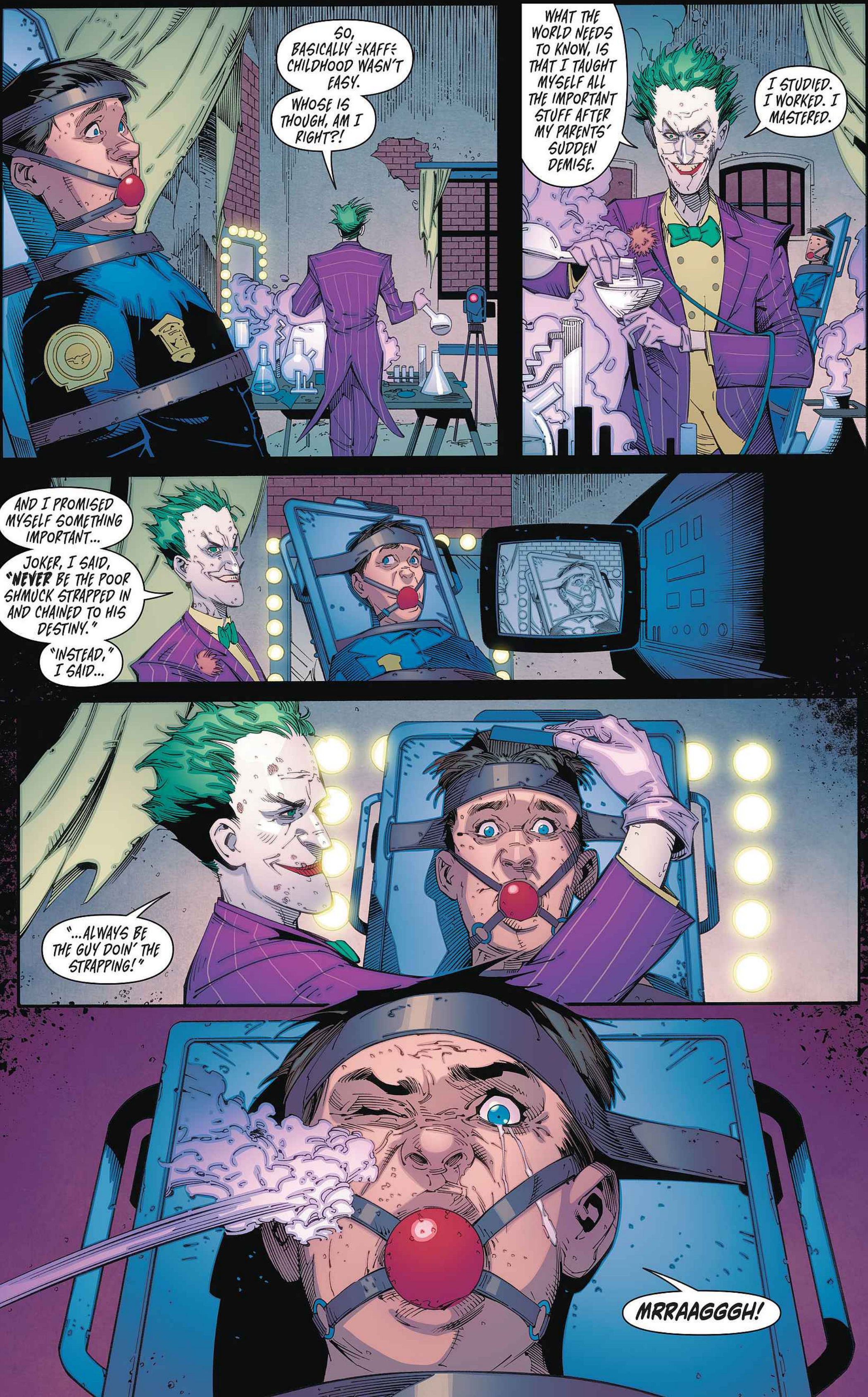
**BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT #2** *variant cover*
*by* ***Jae Lee and June Chung.***




THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE JOKER.
*KAFF*...
WELL, GUESS THIS DIDN'T GO WELL.
CAN'T SAY I'M TOO SURPRISED.
I ONLY WISH I KNEW... WAS IT THE TITAN? OLD AGE? PISSED OFF ARKHAMITE?
OR COULD IT BE THE BEST WAY OF ALL TO MEET MY MAKER...
MY DEAR BROTHER-IN-HARM.
THE MAN YOU FEAR TO LOVE AND LOVE TO FEAR!
B TO THE A TO THE T-MAN!
OR, AS I LIKE TO CALL HIM...
MY BROTHER FROM ANOTHER MOTHER.
*KAFF*...


TELL ME SOMETHING. HAVE YOU EVER HAD A REALLY BAD DAY?
I HAVE. PUH-LENTY OF 'EM. AND LOOK AT ME...
...STILL SMILIN'.
NOW I KNOW YOU'RE WONDERING, SO LET ME TELL YOU WHY I'M MAKING THIS RECORDING.
FIRSTLY, TO PASS ON JUST A SMIDGE OF WHAT I'VE LEARNED IN THE HOPES THAT UNDERSTANDING THE THINGS THAT MAKE ME ME WILL HELP MAKE YOU A BETTER YOU!
JOKER
AND SECOND, BECAUSE I KNOW THIS IS PROBABLY MY LAST TIME TO TALK TO YOU-KNOW-WHO.
I MEAN WHO ELSE WOULD WATCH THIS STUFF WHEN THERE'S WASHED UP MOVIE AND TV STARS PRANCING AND DANCING FOR PRIZES ON ALL THOSE GLORIOUS CHANNELS?!
NOW, LET'S START WITH THE ONE QUESTION YOU'RE DYING TO KNOW...


WHO THE HELL AM I AND WHAT IS MY SECRET ORIGIN?!
WELL, DEAR VIEWER, I'M AS CURIOUS AS YOU ARE...
...SO LET ME GIVE IT TO YA STRAIGHT.
"I WAS, THANKFULLY, ROCKETED FROM A DOOMED PLANET THAT SIMPLY HAD NO SENSE OF HUMOR...
"...AND LOOKING BACK ON IT, NO ABSORBENT DIAPERS EITHER.
"FROM THERE I WAS RAISED BY TWO RICH CIRCUS CLOWNS WHO I HAD TO KILL ONE NIGHT UNDER THE BIG TOP...
"...FOR FORGETTING THEIR WHOOPEE CUSHIONS...
"...AND COMMITTING THE CARDINAL SIN OF CLOWNDOM...
"...FAILING TO BE FUNNY."
PENG!



SO, BASICALLY ≑KAFF≑ CHILDHOOD WASN'T EASY.
WHOSE IS THOUGH, AM I RIGHT?!
WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS TO KNOW, IS THAT I TAUGHT MYSELF ALL THE IMPORTANT STUFF AFTER MY PARENTS' SUDDEN DEMISE.
I STUDIED. I WORKED. I MASTERED.
AND I PROMISED MYSELF SOMETHING IMPORTANT...
JOKER, I SAID, "NEVER BE THE POOR SHMUCK STRAPPED IN AND CHAINED TO HIS DESTINY."
"INSTEAD," I SAID...
"...ALWAYS BE THE GUY DOIN' THE STRAPPING!"
MRRAAGGGH!


"SO, ARMED WITH AN EASILY DIGESTIBLE PHILOSOPHY, I FINALLY MADE MY WAY TO THE CONCRETE CANYONS OF GOTHAM AND FOR MONTHS PLIED MY TRADE AT A VERY LOOOOW LEVEL.
"I WAS BUT AN APPRENTICE FOR URBAN MAYHEM AND MALEVOLENCE UNTIL THE DAY SOME OF MY WORK BUDDIES GOT THEMSELVES INTO TOO MUCH TROUBLE...
"...AND I REALIZED I HAD A FRONT ROW SEAT TO THE GREATEST SHOW IN TOWN.
"LET ME TELL YA, KIDS, ALMOST EVERY NIGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING SPECTACULAR TO SEE IN THE BIG G.
"YOU KNOW HOW EVERYONE OVER 60 REMEMBERS WHERE THEY WERE WHEN KENNEDY WAS SHOT?
"OR WHEN JETER HIT HIS 3000TH HIT?
"OR WHEN THEY STRANGLED THEIR MOTHER'S BEST FRIEND...AND THEN THEIR MOTHER?
"THAT WAS MY NIGHT EVERY NIGHT. KID IN A CANDY STORE.
"I KNEW RIGHT THEN AND THERE TO APPRECIATE IT...
"...BECAUSE I UNDERSTOOD THAT NOTHING LASTS FOREVER.
"AND TRUST ME, PALS AND GALS, NO ONE WAS MORE NOTHING THAN ME."


"IT'S AN AMAZING THING TO REALIZE YOUR DESTINY.
"NATURALLY, I HAD TO GET STARTED IMMEDIATELY!
"SO I RAN STRAIGHT BACK TO MY DEE-LUX APARTMENT IN THE SKY-Y-Y WITHOUT MISSING A BEAT.
GOTHAM Senior Living
"WELL, THAT'S **MOSTLY** TRUE.
GOTHAM Senior Living
GOTHAM Senior Living
GOTHAM Senior Living
"MAN'S GOTTA HAVE **PRIORITIES**, Y'KNOW."
GOTHAM Senior Living


"AS TIME FLEW LICKETY SPLIT, I KEPT MY MIND AND CRAYONS SHARP, TRYING TO GET AN IMAGE OUT OF MY HEAD.
"EXHIBITING A DEDICATION TO CRAFT THAT HAS ALWAYS SERVED ME WELL, I THREW MYSELF INTO MY WORK.
"BELIEVE ME, MR. GLADWELL, I PUT IN MY 10,000 HOURS AND THEN SOME!
"AND IN THE END I BECAME THE RENAISSANCE MAN YOU SEE BEFORE YOU TODAY.
"BUT ALAS, NO ARTIST IS WITHOUT HIS CRITICS.
"AND NO CRITIC CAN TELL AN ARTIST WHAT HE DOESN'T ALREADY KNOW ABOUT WHO HE IS.
"IN THAT MOMENT, I KNEW MYSELF BETTER THAN ANYONE, BUT I COULDN'T YET SEE MYSELF.
"SO I NEEDED A CERTAIN SOMEONE TO HELP SHOW ME MY OWN FACE."



I NEEDED TO SHARE ALL THIS NEWFOUND CLARITY WITH THE ONE SOMEONE WHO KNEW EXACTLY WHAT LIFE IN ALL ITS GREENS AND PURPLES COULD BE.
IN THE BLUSTERY FLUSTERY COLD, I MADE MY MOVE.
"AND SUFFICE TO SAY...
"...IT WASN'T ALL PEACHES AND CREAM.
"BUT ON THE OTHER HAND--
"--IT WENT PERFECTLY!
"SURE, MISTAKES WERE MADE AND THERE WERE CERTAINLY MISUNDERSTANDINGS.
"I MEAN, WHAT CAN I SAY, MY BUDDY BATS TALKS WITH HIS HANDS A LOT.
"IN THE END, HE... YOU...HELPED ME SEE MYSELF AS I TRULY AM.
"THE REAL ME.
"AND IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
"TELL ME SOMETHING. HAVE YOU EVER HAD A REALLY GOOD DAY?
"BECAUSE I HAVE...
"...AND IT MADE THE BAD ONES ALL WORTHWHILE."


WHICH FINALLY BRINGS ME TO NOW AND MY BEQUEATHING.
I, PHINEAS B. JOKERSTEIN THE THIRD, BEING OF ≶KAFF≷ UNSOUND MIND AND DUBIOUS BODY, DOTH HEREBY LEAVE THE CITY OF GIDDY GOTHAM A GIFT.
SEE, I MAY BE DONE IN BODY AND MIND...
...BUT IT'S THE SPIRIT THAT STILL LIVES ON.
THERE'S A BIG BOMB READY TO GO OFF, BUT IT'S NOT THE RATTLE-AND-ROLL KIND THAT MAKES A MESS.
THIS BOMB IS MORE SUBTLE.
SILENT BUT DEADLY.
A LAST HUG FROM YOUR UNCLE JOKER FROM THE GREAT BEYOND.
WHO I AM! WHY I AM! YES I AM!
I'm whoever you want me to be
SO GET READY FOR THE BOOMSHAKKALAKKA WITHOUT THE BOOM OL' CHUM!
HA HA HA HA!
STOP PLAYBACK.


I TRULY DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU MANAGED TO BE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY WITH SUCH AN EVIL HUMAN BEING, MASTER BRUCE.
SOMETIMES NEITHER DO I, ALFRED.
BUT RIGHT NOW ALL THAT MATTERS IS HE'S FINALLY DEAD.
AND I'VE GOT ONE LAST MESS OF HIS TO FIGURE OUT AND CLEAN UP BEFORE--
BZZZT
BATMAN... I NEED YOUR HELP...
COMMISSIONER-- WHAT IS IT--WHAT'S WRONG?
JAMES W GORDON COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
...THE BASTARD...HEH... SOMEHOW HE GOT ME...
...HEHE HEHE...

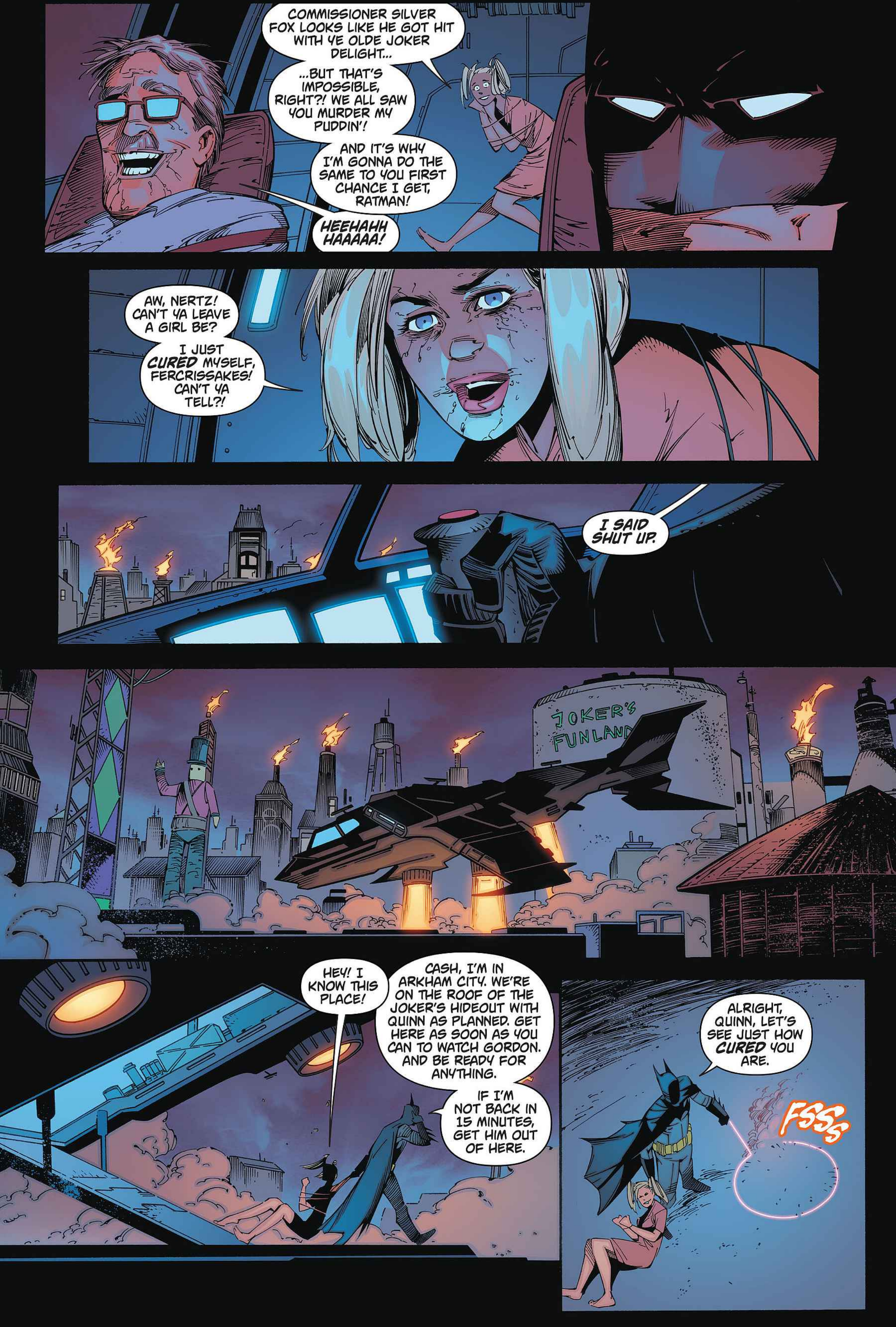

HA HA STOP!
HA HA HAHA HURTS...
...HA HA HA SO MUCH!!!
HAHA--WON'T GIVE THAT--HAHA--PASTY-FACED BASTARD--HAHAHA--THE SATISFACTION--HAHA--OF GETTING THE LAST--HAHAHA--
COMMISSIONER!
DINI! CALL A DOCTOR--NOW!
UM... LIEUTENANT CASH...
...LOOKS LIKE HE MAY HAVE ALREADY MADE A CALL.


KRRSSH
WHERE IS HE?
BATMAN! DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON? I THOUGHT JOKER WAS--
DON'T FREAKIN' MOVE!
DINI!
PUT YOUR DAMN GUN DOWN! WHAT'RE YA GONNA DO, SHOOT THE ONE GUY WHO CAN HELP US?
BUT HOW DO WE KNOW HE'S REALLY--
GUY SAVED MY ASS A HALF-DOZEN TIMES THIS MONTH-- BELIEVE ME, I KNOW IT'S--
THWIIP
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.
CASH, CALL NEW BLACKGATE-- TELL THEM I'M ON MY WAY--


--AND GET SOMEONE READY TO SEE ME!
"GOTHAM CITY PENITENTIARY AKA BLACKGATE PRISON. OR AT LEAST IT WAS.
"IT BURNED DOWN A WHILE BACK, BUT GOOD OL' GOTHAM NEVER LIKES TO MOVE ON. THEY JUST LOVE MAKIN' THE SAME MISTAKES IN THE SAME PLACES.
"SO LIKE SOME WASHED UP HOLLYWOOD ACTRESS OVER 40--OR ACTUALLY 30 IF WE'RE BEING HONEST--IN COME THE CONSTRUCTION GUYS AND UP GOES A FRESH COAT OF PAINT.
...WE JUST GOTTA HAVE FAITH THAT THE FUTURE IS GONNA BE BETTER THAN THE PAST.


15583
THAT'S IT, DOC!
I'M CURED!
I CAN'T BE LIKE THIS PLACE.
JUST DOLLED UP AND SMILIN' STUPID, HOPIN' NOBODY SEES JUST HOW MUCH I MISS MY PUDDIN'.
MY JOKEY WOULD WANT ME TO MOVE ON--START FRESH, NOT HANG ON TO SOMETHIN' JUST FER POSTERITY.
AND FIRST THINGS FIRST, HE'D TELL ME TO GET THE HELL OUTTA HERE. PUH-RONTO. BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.
QUINN.
...SIGH... MY PUDDIN', STILL LOOKIN' OUT FOR ME.

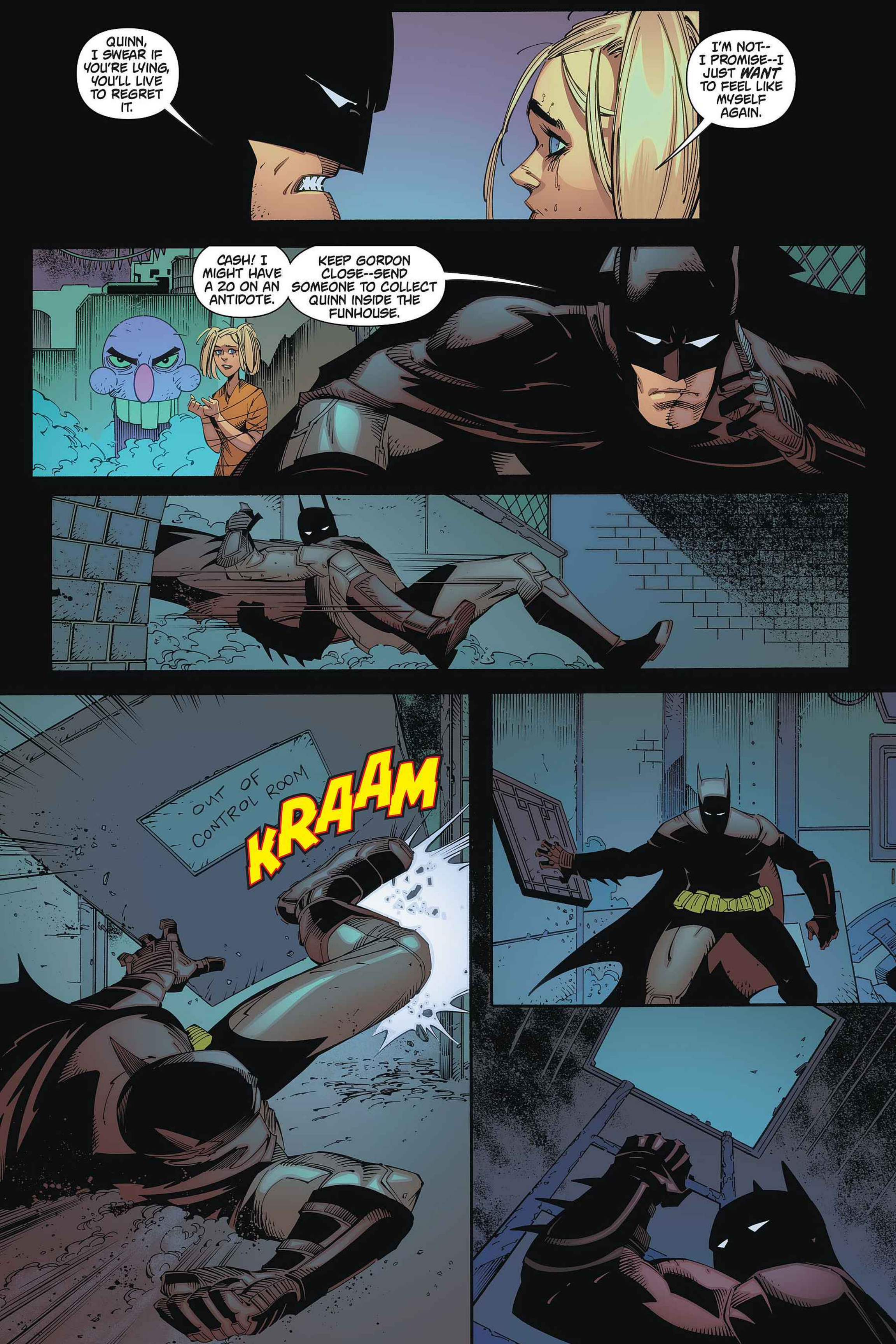

STEP BACK, TURN OVER THE BED AND GET BEHIND IT.
KOOM
HEY--
THWIP
--I JUST GOT THIS SHIRT!
YA FIGURE I'M SINGLE NOW AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO ASK ME FOR A DATE?! I'M AN OLD FASHIONED GIRL, YA KNOW!
SHUT UP, HARLEY.



COMMISSIONER SILVER FOX LOOKS LIKE HE GOT HIT WITH YE OLDE JOKER DELIGHT...
...BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, RIGHT?! WE ALL SAW YOU MURDER MY PUDDIN'!
AND IT'S WHY I'M GONNA DO THE SAME TO YOU FIRST CHANCE I GET, RATMAN!
HEEHAHH HAAAAA!
AW, NERTZ! CAN'T YA LEAVE A GIRL BE?
I JUST CURED MYSELF, FERCRISSAKES! CAN'T YA TELL?!
I SAID SHUT UP.
JOKER'S FUNLAND
HEY! I KNOW THIS PLACE!
CASH, I'M IN ARKHAM CITY. WE'RE ON THE ROOF OF THE JOKER'S HIDEOUT WITH QUINN AS PLANNED. GET HERE AS SOON AS YOU CAN TO WATCH GORDON. AND BE READY FOR ANYTHING.
IF I'M NOT BACK IN 15 MINUTES, GET HIM OUT OF HERE.
ALRIGHT, QUINN, LET'S SEE JUST HOW CURED YOU ARE.
FSSS


WHEEE--
--EEEEEEE--
--EEEEEEE--
--EEEE!
NICE RIDE, BATSY. JOKER ALWAYS SAID YOU HAD SOFT HANDS.
JOKERS RIDE
NOW DO ME A FAVOR--
...AND TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT GAMES YOU AND THAT DEMENTED CLOWN STILL HAVE HANGING OUT THERE. BUT I'M SICK OF IT!
WHAM
OUCH!


THIS IS WHERE THE TWO OF YOU PLANNED AND WORKED FOR MONTHS WHILE YOU WERE LOCKED INSIDE ARKHAM CITY.
I KNOW SOMEWHERE IN HERE IS A CURE FOR THAT POISON. I KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING HERE THAT CAN HELP COMMISSIONER GORDON.
JOKE RI
IF THERE'S ANY TRACE OF HUMANITY LEFT INSIDE YOU, "DOCTOR," YOU'LL HELP ME FIND IT.
YOU'RE...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I WANT TO HELP.
BECAUSE IF I DON'T...IF I KEEP LETTING GOOD FOLKS DIE...
...THEN WHAT THE HELL IS THE REAL ME GONNA HANG ON TO?
I'M SO SORRY...
...WHAT HAVE I *SNIFF* DONE?
QUINN, I HAVE NO IDEA IF YOU'RE BEING SINCERE, BUT--
DOWNSTAIRS. THE SUB-BASEMENT. THAT'S WHERE HE KEPT IT.
I PUT THE LAST BATCH OF ANTI-TOXIN DOWN THERE MYSELF JUST BEFORE YOU KI-- BEFORE HE...
...YOU KNOW.
THERE'S AN ENTRANCE GRATE IN THE CONTROL ROOM NEXT DOOR.

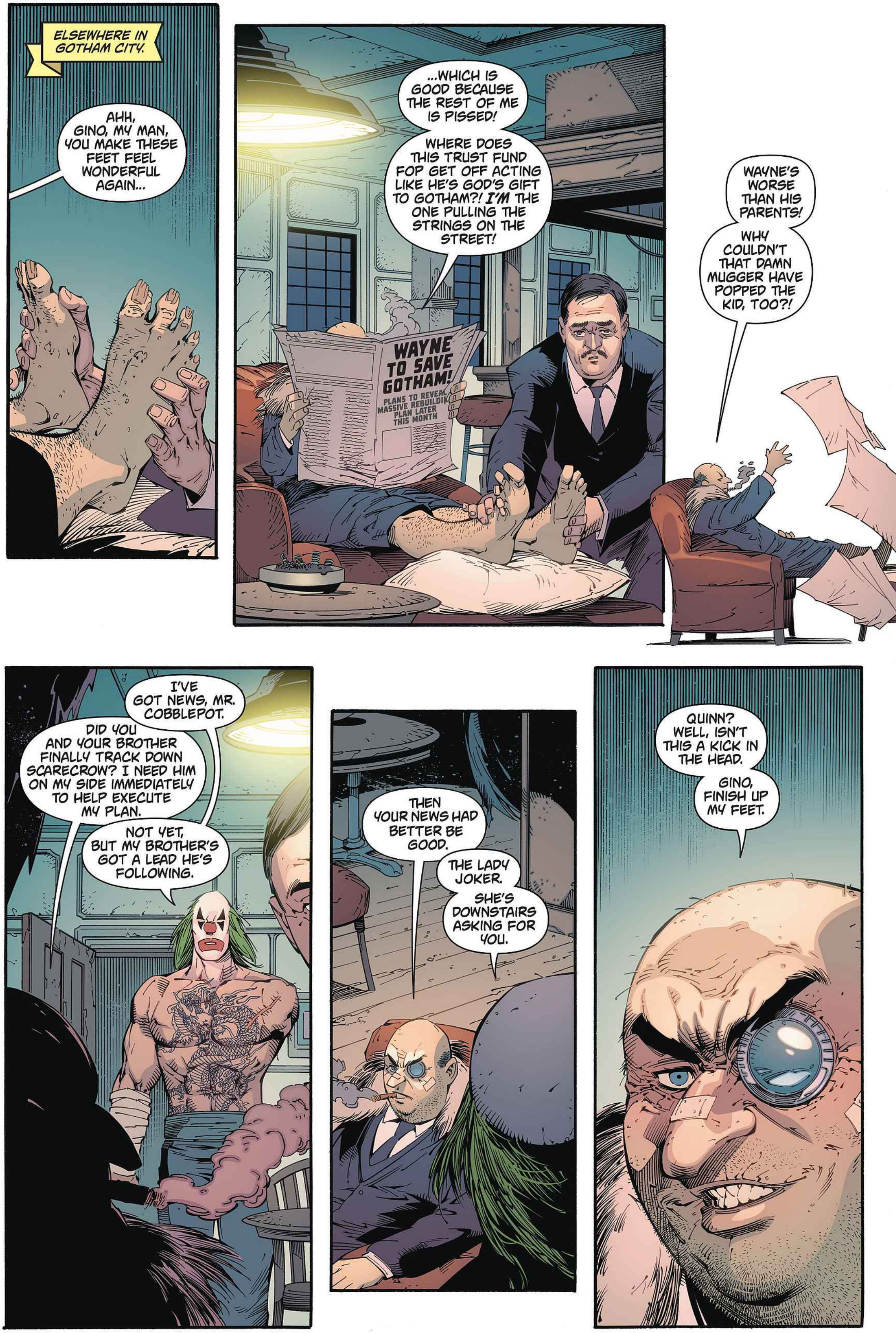

QUINN, I SWEAR IF YOU'RE LYING, YOU'LL LIVE TO REGRET IT.
I'M NOT-- I PROMISE--I JUST *WANT* TO FEEL LIKE MYSELF AGAIN.
CASH! I MIGHT HAVE A 20 ON AN ANTIDOTE.
KEEP GORDON CLOSE--SEND SOMEONE TO COLLECT QUINN INSIDE THE FUNHOUSE.
OUT OF CONTROL ROOM
KRAAM


HNN.
JOKER SPECIAL SAUCE
JOKER SPECIAL SAUCE
JOKER SPECIAL SAUCE
THAT WAS A GOOD START, HARLEY.
EVERY JOURNEY HAS A FIRST STEP... AND IF YOU CAN'T BE COMPLETELY HONEST RIGHT FROM THE GET GO...
"...WELL, AT LEAST 50% WILL GET YA HALFWAY THERE."


SEVERAL WEEKS AGO.
C'MON, CROC-O-GATOR, I BROUGHT YA SOME SNACKS AND I LOST MY BOYFRIEND!!
LEAST YOU COULD DO IS HAVE A HEART AND HEAR ME OUT.
WITH MY DEAR JOKEY GONE TO THE PEARLY GATES, I GOT HALF THIS CITY LOOKIN' FOR HIS BODY, BUT I KNOW YOU AIN'T GONNA LEAVE THESE TUNNELS FOR NO AMOUNT OF ANYTHIN'.
SO WHAT I'M HOPIN' IS, YOU COULD LOOK AFTER A REAL UNUSUAL TREASURE I GOT STASHED UNDER JOKER AND ME'S LOVE SHACK.
CHANGE IS IN THE AIR FOR ALL OF US SINCE ARKHAM CITY WENT KABLOOEY AND CHANGE STINKS WORSE THAN A CLAYFACE FART!
I KNOW YA AIN'T BEEN FEELIN' WELL SO I'M OFFERIN' YA SOME NICE HOME COOKIN' AND A REASON TO GET UP IN THE MORNING.
PLUS, IF IT ALL GOES ACCORDIN' TO ME AND MY FORMER PUDDIN'S PLANS...
...I'LL BE OFFERIN' YA A LONG-EARED, GRAVEL-VOICED DELICACY.
ALL FER PRETTY MUCH JUST DOING WHAT YOU WERE GONNA BE DOING ANYWAY.
NOW, THAT'S A MEAL YOU CAN'T REFUSE!


TODAY.
CASH, IT LOOKS LIKE HARLEY WAS RIGHT.
THERE ARE SEVERAL DRUMS OF WHAT LOOKS LIKE AN ANTI-TOXIN FOR THE JOKER'S POISON.
GOOD TO HEAR 'CAUSE THE COMMISSIONER ISN'T LOOKING GOOD.
STAY CLOSE TO GORDON, I'LL BE UP IN A--
RAARGH!
UNFF!
KOOM
CROC-- I'M NOT HERE FOR YOU DAMN IT--WE DON'T NEED TO FIGHT!


THIS ISN'T A FIGHT, BATMAN--
--IT'S AN EXECUTION!
RRAGG!
NNGG!
SHRRK
YOUR STUPID TRICKS ARE NOTHING TO ME!
DEATH'S STENCH STILL TRAVELS WITH YOU.



ELSEWHERE IN GOTHAM CITY.
AHH, GINO, MY MAN, YOU MAKE THESE FEET FEEL WONDERFUL AGAIN...
...WHICH IS GOOD BECAUSE THE REST OF ME IS PISSED!
WHERE DOES THIS TRUST FUND FOP GET OFF ACTING LIKE HE'S GOD'S GIFT TO GOTHAM?! I'M THE ONE PULLING THE STRINGS ON THE STREET!
WAYNE TO SAVE GOTHAM!
PLANS TO REVEAL MASSIVE REBUILDIN PLAN LATER THIS MONTH
WAYNE'S WORSE THAN HIS PARENTS!
WHY COULDN'T THAT DAMN MUGGER HAVE POPPED THE KID, TOO?!
I'VE GOT NEWS, MR. COBBLEPOT.
DID YOU AND YOUR BROTHER FINALLY TRACK DOWN SCARECROW? I NEED HIM ON MY SIDE IMMEDIATELY TO HELP EXECUTE MY PLAN.
NOT YET, BUT MY BROTHER'S GOT A LEAD HE'S FOLLOWING.
THEN YOUR NEWS HAD BETTER BE GOOD.
THE LADY JOKER.
SHE'S DOWNSTAIRS ASKING FOR YOU.
QUINN? WELL, ISN'T THIS A KICK IN THE HEAD.
GINO, FINISH UP MY FEET.


ARGHH!
KRAKK
KRRSH
QUINN WANTED THESE PROTECTED--BUT I'M GONNA SMASH YOU TO PASTE WITH EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM INSTEAD!
BATMAN-- WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU--GORDON'S GETTING WORSE BY THE SECOND!
HAHA HA!
CROC'S TRYING TO DESTROY THE CURE FOR GORDON!
DID YOU SAY CROC?
THAT FREAK TOOK A PIECE OF ME!


HAHA!
CASH! YOU NEED TO GET GORDON DOWN HERE FOR THE ANTIDOTE NOW!
CHRIST.
WE'RE ON OUR WAY--
BLAM BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
AGHH!
YAGHH!
NAGHH!
--BUT I'M DEFINITELY PUTTING IN FOR A RAISE!
KAFF HEE HEE HEE HEH KAFF
GOING TO SNAP YOU IN TWO, BATMAN!
ARRGH!


MIND YOUR LEVERAGE, CROC!
RRAGH!
WHAMM
CROC-- WAYLON--A GOOD MAN'S LIFE IS AT STAKE.
BURY YOUR HATRED-- FOCUS ON YOUR HUMANITY.
I NEED THAT CURE.
NO SUCH ANIMAL AS A GOOD MAN--
--YOUR LIVES MEAN NOTHING TO ME, BATMAN.
I'M GONNA POUR THIS LAST CANISTER DOWN YOUR THROAT AND YOU'RE GONNA DROWN KNOWING YOU LET YOUR "GOOD MAN" DIE!
NOT GOING TO HAPPEN, CROC.
WELL LOOK AT THAT...


...THEY TAUGHT MY BOOTS TO TALK!
--HEHHE HHEH--
ARGGGH!
YOU! BACK TO FEED ME YOUR OTHER HAND?!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM BLAM
CASH! SAVE THAT CANISTER!
WAIT-- WHERE ARE YOU--?!
SPLASSH
I'LL FIND BATMAN AND FEAST ON HIS BONES!
BUT FIRST-- DINNER!


GRAHH--
HAHA HAHA!
KKRRKKK
HOW'D YOU DO THAT?!
ONE OF THE ICE BLASTS FREEZE GAVE ME TO TAKE OUT THE JOKER--I HAD ONE LEFT.
HAHA HAHA!
DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME--HOLD HIM DOWN AND PRY HIS MOUTH OPEN.
CHANK
SPLSHHH
HA HAHA HA!
KAFF... UNNHH...HEH... KAFF
KAFF... MY FACE... KAFF...
WE KNOW, IT'S KILLING US TOO.
KAFF-- WELL I'LL BE DAMNED--
--YOU ALMOST JUST MADE HALF A JOKE.


SEND THAT BACKSTABBING WITCH IN.
WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME, HOW LONG DO YA THINK A GIRL'S GONNA WAIT?!
SINCE YOU AND YOUR BOYFRIEND RIPPED ME OFF SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY YOU AREN'T WAITING ON A SLAB OF ICE WITH AN UMBRELLA THROUGH YOUR HEART.
WHY ARE YOU WASTING MY VALUABLE TIME?
TO LET YOU KNOW THAT GORDON AND/OR BATMAN ARE PROBABLY DEAD AS DOORNAILS.
AND EVEN IF THEY AIN'T, THEY KNOW NOW THAT KILLIN' MY PUDDIN' AIN'T GONNA MEAN THE END TO NOTHIN'! I GOT LOTS OF JOKER'S TOYS HIDDEN ALL AROUND.
GOTHAM'S CHANGIN' AND I FIGURE YOU'N ME ARE THE ONLY ONES LEFT WHO KNOW WHERE THE STRINGS ARE ON THIS PUPPET OF A TOWN!
SO LET'S BE A HELLUVA LOT SMARTER THAN THE REST OF THESE ARKHAM LIFERS AND GET TO BE FRIENDS!
HARLEY, I HAVE SEVERAL PLANS FOR THE CITY'S FUTURE IN THE WORKS AND THEY MOST CERTAINLY ***DO NOT*** INCLUDE YOU.
WE CAN FIX THAT-- PUT 'ER THERE--
***--PARTNER!***


PANOSIAN

**BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT #3** *variant cover*
*by* ***Paolo Rivera and Joe Rivera.***




GOTHAM STONE RIDGE PENITENTIARY.
RRN...


GOTHAM CITY.
...I'M TELLING YOU, THE KNIGHTS GOT NO PITCHIN' THIS YEAR! NOT WITH PURDIN'S ELBOW PROBLEMS.
YEAH, WELL, WHO WON OUR FANTASY LEAGUE THE LAST TWO YEARS?!
ONE HINT... HE'S STANDIN' RIGHT HERE 'N IT WASN'T YOU.
YEAH, WELL LET'S ASK THE OWNER OF THE DAMN TEAM...
...I MEAN, SINCE WE GOT HIM RIGHT HERE.
MMFF GNNN HFFF...


SO, MISTER OWNER MAN, YOU'RE GONNA TALK TO YOUR MANAGER AND SOME OF YOUR PLAYERS AND START MAKING SUGGESTIONS OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS.
YEAH, SUGGESTIONS, RIGHT.
THESE SUGGESTIONS WILL BE COMING FROM US AS TO WHAT NIGHTS YOUR TEAM IS GONNA WIN GAMES AND LOSE GAMES, UNDERSTAND?
YEAH, OTHERWISE YOUR FAMILY'S GONNA HAVE TO HIT THE SHOWERS EARLIER THAN EXPECTED.
SLAMM
B-BATMAN...
DON'T YOU WISH.


KRAKK
KZZZAAKK
AAIIEEEEE!
WE'RE NOT FINISHED HERE.
...PLEASE...
I'M SURE THE PEOPLE IN THAT TRUNK SAID THE SAME THING.
--NO--C'MON MAN--WE WAS JUST GONNA GET SOME CASH OUT OF HIM--TRY'N IMPRESS HARLEY--YOU DON'T NEED TO--
THE JOKER.
YOU LOVE TO DRESS LIKE HIM AND TALK LIKE HIM--
--SO I'VE DECIDED TO HELP PUT SOME OF HIS WORDS IN YOUR MOUTH!


THIS RECORD THE JOKER LEFT BEHIND WAS SAD AND PATHETIC.
SHRRIP
My Diary
IT'S A RUNNING SCORECARD OF ALL HIS VICTIMS THAT I'M SURE HE FOUND IMPRESSIVE.
--MMPH--
HOWEVER, I SEE THIS LIST OF NAMES FOR WHAT IT IS...
...ONE LAST, SAD GRASP AT RELEVANCE BY BRINGING PAIN TO INNOCENTS.
LIKE SO MANY IN GOTHAM, YOU FOLLOW BLINDLY DOWN THE PATH OF FOOLS, CLOWNS, AND PERFORMERS...
...BURNING BRIGHT FOR A MOMENT...
...AND THEN NEVER TO BE THOUGHT OF AGAIN.


TIM, TELL ALFRED I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!
I TOLD HIM THAT TEN MINUTES AGO, BRUCE.
BURRITO ME!
GLAD I COULD COME OVER TO HELP WITH THE PRESENTATION. SEEMS LIKE BATMAN JUST GOT BACK ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES AGO.
HE DID-- CHMFF--I'M STILL LOOKING EVERYWHERE FOR QUINN.
THIS GOTHAM PROJECT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE CITY THOUGH, SO I WANT TO BE THERE.
THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP.
I OWE YOU A DINNER.
HOW ABOUT CHUTNEY MASALA?
SURE.
COPY OF YOUR SPEECH IS ON THE SEAT, SIR.
NOTHING SCARIER THAN TALKING IN PUBLIC. I HATE IT.
NO SURPRISE. BILLIONAIRE PLAYBOYS ARE A COWARDLY LOT, SIR.
BUT I WILL SAY THAT IT'S WONDERFUL TO SEE THAT WHILE BATMAN WAS UP LATE, BRUCE WAYNE CAN STILL BE...
...A MORNING PERSON.


...SO WHILE IT WAS ON THIS SPOT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT OUR CITY'S NIGHTMARE STARTED...
...IT IS ALSO ON THIS SPOT THAT THE *DREAM* OF GOTHAM WILL BEGIN TO TAKE SHAPE.
OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS, MY FOUNDATION HAS BEEN WORKING WITH SOME OF THE CITY'S BEST AND BRIGHTEST TO PREPARE FOR THIS NEW PROJECT.
EVEN VISIONARIES LIKE SIMON STAGG, WHO HAVE NO DIRECT TIES TO THE CITY, HAVE RISEN TO THE OCCASION... EAGER TO HELP US PREPARE FOR THIS DIFFICULT, BUT NECESSARY, JOURNEY.
IN THE END, I HAVE DISCOVERED FROM OUR RECENT COLLECTIVE ORDEAL THAT IT'S LONG PAST TIME FOR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE MOST BENEFITTED FROM GOTHAM'S SPIRIT AND HISTORY TO PUSH BACK AGAINST ITS DARK NIGHTS.
IT'S TIME TO LET GOTHAM CITY HAVE ITS MUCH DESERVED TIME IN THE SUN.
POLICE
WE WANT GOTHAM REINVENTED!
WE NEED GOTHAM REINVIGORATED!
WE WILL SEE GOTHAM REBORN!


LIKED THE RAH-RAH AT THE END THERE, WAYNE. LET'S HOPE WE ALL SEE HEALTHY RETURNS ON OUR SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENTS.
BY THE WAY, YOU'VE MET MY DAUGHTER, SAPPHIRE, HAVEN'T YOU? MY BEST CREATION OF ALL. SHE'S SINGLE TOO!
UM...YES, THAT'S...
I APOLOGIZE FOR MY FATHER'S FORWARDNESS, MISTER WAYNE.
NO WORRIES, IT WAS NICE SEEING--
BRUCE, A MOMENT PLEASE TO DISCUSS THE BOND ISSUE--
YOU'RE A PRINCE, LUCIUS. STAGG'S INTRODUCED ME TO HIS DAUGHTER A HALF-DOZEN TIMES. IT'S CREEPY.
SOMEONE'S HERE TO SEE YOU.
COMMISSIONER! HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN WEEKS.
BEEN...BUSY. THE JOKER LEFT A HELLUVA LOT OF HEADACHES IN HIS WAKE.
I HAVE TO GET BACK TO WORK, BUT I JUST WANTED TO SAY YOU GAVE A DAMN GOOD SPEECH.
BUT MY EXPERIENCE IS THAT SPEECHES ABOUT REBUILDING GOTHAM ARE ABOUT AS RARE AS HOT AIR ON A SUMMER DAY.
OFFICER CASH TELLS ME YOU HAVE SOME BIG PLANS, BUT WE'VE HAD BIG PLANS THROWN AT OUR FEET BEFORE.
I JUST HOPE THAT DESPITE ALL YOUR WORDS YOU'RE A MAN OF ACTION, WAYNE.
GOOD DAY.
I WANT YOU TO MEET WITH GORDON AND FIND OUT WHAT THE POLICE NEED.
WORK IT OUT WITH THE MAYOR'S OFFICE THROUGH SOME SORT OF MUNICIPAL TRUST.
YOU'RE THE BOSS, BUT WITH THE WAY THE DEPARTMENT'S BEEN DECIMATED, THAT WON'T BE CHEAP.
GET HIM WHATEVER HE REQUESTS.


BRATTA
BRATTA
DAMN IT! BROAD DAYLIGHT!
SHUT UP AND GET DOWN, LUCIUS!
CASH! GET THE DEPUTY MAYOR OUT OF HERE!
GORDON'S UP ON THE PLATFORM!
BRATTA BRATTA
GET OUTTA HERE, WAYNE--
--AND I'LL COVER-- UNF!
COMMISSIONER--!



WELL, WELL, WELL, BRUCE WAYNE HIMSELF. GOTHAM'S MAN-OF-THE-HOUR!
LOOKS LIKE WE CAUGHT THE PRIZE PIG RIGHT OUT OF THE GATE.
SO, MISTER MONEY, HOW MUCH YA THINK YOU AND YOUR RICH PALS PAY ME TO LET YA GO?
NOTHING.
I KINDA DOUBT THAT.
BUT IF THAT'S TRUE...
...YOU GOT FIVE SECONDS TO GIVE ME A REAL GOOD REASON NOT TO BLOW YER BRAINS OUT.
ONE, TWO--
FIVE.


GOTHAM STONE RIDGE PENITENTIARY.
DON'T KNOW WHY YER WASTING YOUR TIME WITH HIM, BUT YA GOT TEN MINUTES, FATHER.
AGNUS DEI, QUI TOLLIS PECCATA MUNDI...MISERERE NOBIS.
AGNUS DEI.
DONA NOBIS PACEM.
HRRN.


WHAM
WAYNE-- WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU--?
YOU RICH GUYS ALL THINK DOIN' CROSSFIT TWICE A WEEK MAKES YA--HEY!
KRAKK
AGHH!
WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED.
THOSE WERE LUCKY SHOTS. I'M REALLY OUT OF MY ELEMENT.
GET YOUR MAN TO YOUR CAR, WAYNE! GCPD WILL HANDLE WHAT'S BACK THERE.
GOOD THINKING.


YOU KNOW WHAT I NEED. IT'S IN THE TRUNK.
I'M GOING TO GRAB IT AND I WANT YOU TO TAKE THE CAR AND GET OUT--
NO!
STAGG!
ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE IF YOU RICH GUYS REALLY HAVE BLUE BLOOD!
SLAM

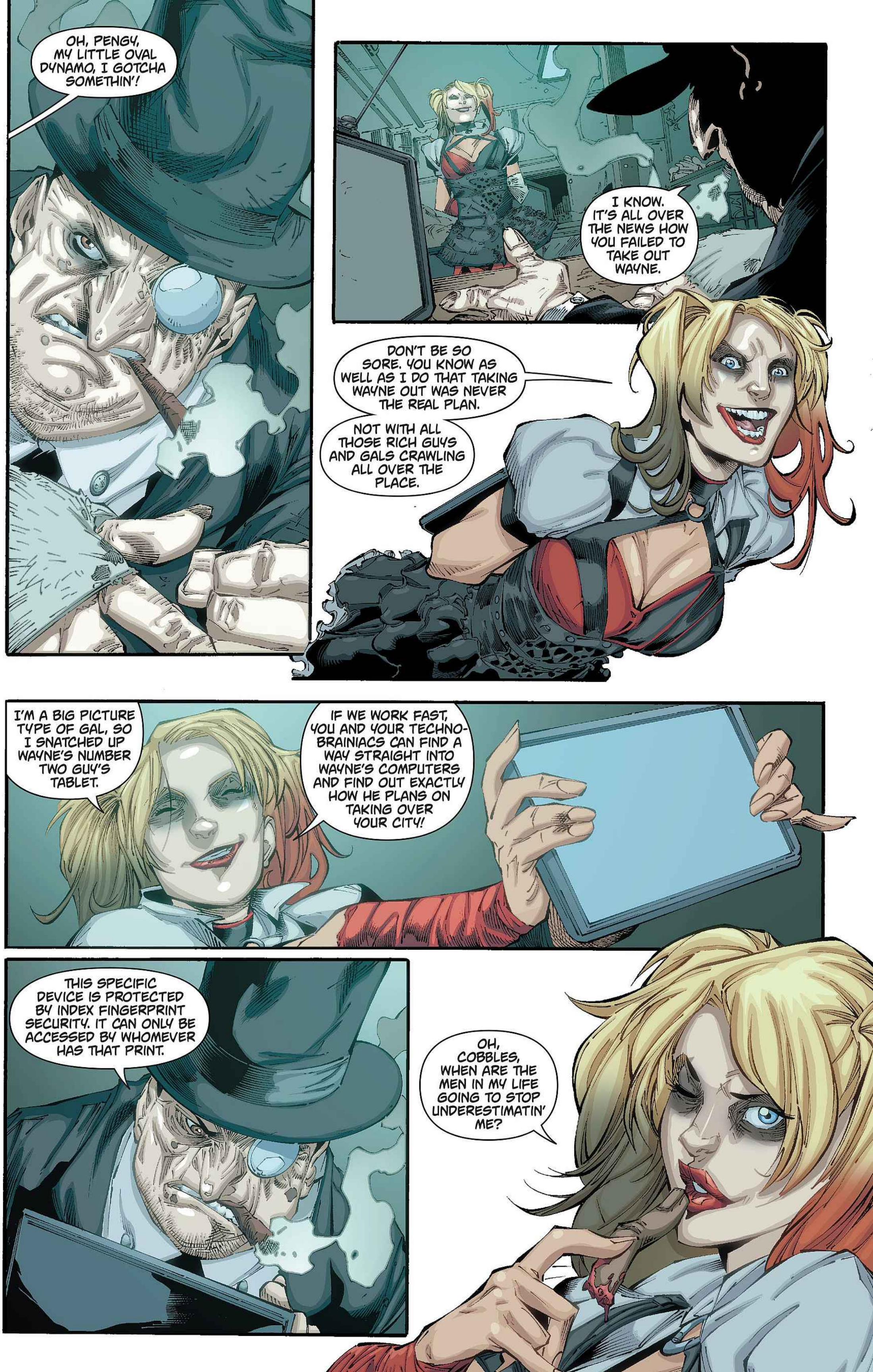

SIMON--RUN!
THAT'S TWO I OWE YOU, BRUCE!
JUST GET OUT OF HERE-- I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
LOOKS LIKE MONEYBAGS HERE THINKS BEIN' LOADED MAKES YOU A HERO.
I'M NO HERO, BUT I KNOW BEING A VIOLENT AND IMMORAL THUG MAKES YOU A SOCIOPATH!
CHOKK
BUT LET ME SHOW YOU SOME TRICKS THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY.
UNFF!
SKUNCH
FRAK



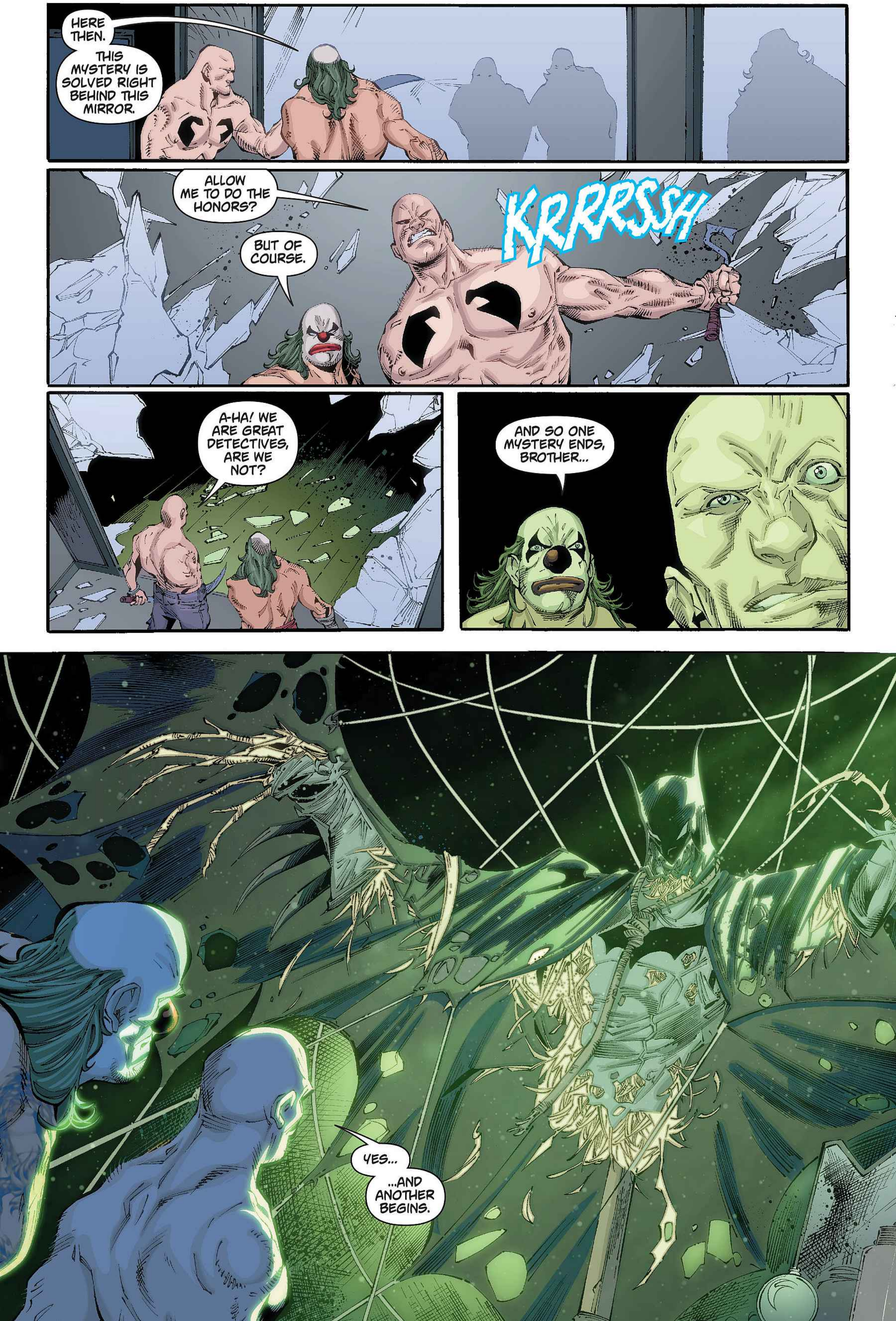
HUFF HUFF
LOOK OUT, LUCIUS!
INCOMING!
SKRAKK
PARDON ME!
RRAMM
NICE.
IT'S CALLED DIVERTING ATTENTION AWAY FROM "BATTLIN' BRUCE" AND SHOWING ANYONE TAKING PHONE PICS THAT ALL GOTHAMITES ARE READY TO PLAY ROUGH WHEN NEED BE.
ALWAYS THREE STEPS AHEAD. THAT'S WHY YOU MAKE THE BIG BUCKS.
FEEL FREE TO MAKE THEM BIGGER ANYTIME.
GOING TO BE ODD SEEING YOU IN ACTION WHILE THE SUN'S OUT.
TEXT ALFRED ON A SECURE CONNECTION--WITH BATMOBILE DOWN, TELL HIM I NEED A VEHICLE ASAP JUST IN CASE.


It's Fox. BW needs special vehicle.
KNOCK, KNOCK!
SKASH
WHO'S THERE?
I HARLEY!
I HARLEY WHO?
I HARLEY KNOW YA...
...BUT I LIKE YA ALREADY!


WHAK
KRAK
BRATTA BRATTA
LOOK WHO FINALLY MADE IT TO THE FIESTA--BATTY HIMSELF!
UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, I ALWAYS LEAVE PARTIES EARLY!
POOM
AND I DON'T FEEL SAFE DRIVING A MOTORCYCLE WITH A PASSENGER--
KLIPP
--IT THROWS MY BALANCE OFF!
HRRN.


OH, PENGY, MY LITTLE OVAL DYNAMO, I GOTCHA SOMETHIN'!
I KNOW. IT'S ALL OVER THE NEWS HOW YOU FAILED TO TAKE OUT WAYNE.
DON'T BE SO SORE. YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT TAKING WAYNE OUT WAS NEVER THE REAL PLAN.
NOT WITH ALL THOSE RICH GUYS AND GALS CRAWLING ALL OVER THE PLACE.
I'M A BIG PICTURE TYPE OF GAL, SO I SNATCHED UP WAYNE'S NUMBER TWO GUY'S TABLET.
IF WE WORK FAST, YOU AND YOUR TECHNO-BRAINIACS CAN FIND A WAY STRAIGHT INTO WAYNE'S COMPUTERS AND FIND OUT EXACTLY HOW HE PLANS ON TAKING OVER YOUR CITY!
THIS SPECIFIC DEVICE IS PROTECTED BY INDEX FINGERPRINT SECURITY. IT CAN ONLY BE ACCESSED BY WHOMEVER HAS THAT PRINT.
OH, COBBLES, WHEN ARE THE MEN IN MY LIFE GOING TO STOP UNDERESTIMATIN' ME?

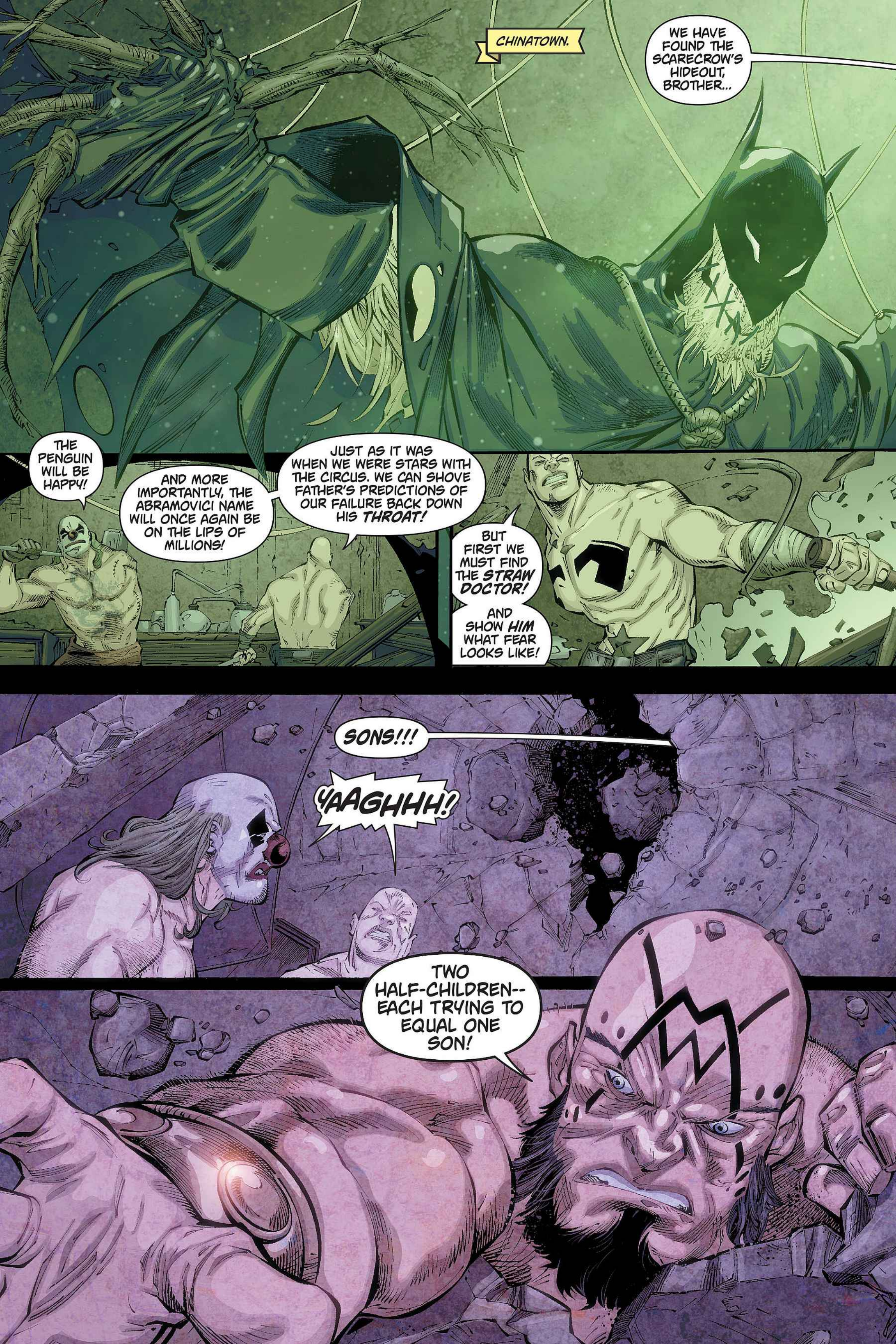

CHINATOWN.
WE HAVE SPENT DAYS INVESTIGATING, AND HAVE BEEN TOLD MANY THINGS ABOUT YOUR TOY STORE, MISTER CHEN.
WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY YOUR ENEMIES THAT IT HOLDS SECRETS INSIDE.
SECRETS OF INTEREST TO THE PENGUIN.
MY BROTHER IS CORRECT, THOUGH HE LEAVES OUT ONE IMPORTANT POINT...
THE ABRAMOVICI BROTHERS HATE SECRETS.
KRASSH
AND SECRETS, AS WE ALL KNOW...
...DON'T LIKE THE LIGHT.
NEAR THE BACK, BROTHER. THAT IS WHAT I WAS TOLD.


HERE THEN.
THIS MYSTERY IS SOLVED RIGHT BEHIND THIS MIRROR.
ALLOW ME TO DO THE HONORS?
BUT OF COURSE.
KRRRSSH
A-HA! WE ARE GREAT DETECTIVES, ARE WE NOT?
AND SO ONE MYSTERY ENDS, BROTHER...
YES...
...AND ANOTHER BEGINS.


GOTHAM CITY.
SAINT IGNATIUS HOSPITAL.
WE HAD THE NETWORK CLOSED OFF WITHIN 27 SECONDS.
THE TABLET HAS PROTOCOLS IN PLACE. IF I DON'T LOG IN EVERY 15 MINUTES, IT WIPES ITSELF CLEAN.
SO BY NOW, HARLEY QUINN AND HER FREAK BRIGADE ARE JUST HOLDING ONTO A $2000 HUNK OF PLASTIC AND METAL.
THAT'S GOOD, BUT I WAS ASKING ABOUT--
I'M FINE. JUST DON'T ASK ME TO DO TOO MUCH TYPING.
THE DOCTOR'S GOING TO BE BACK ANY MINUTE.
I'LL HAVE AN ASSOCIATE TRACK THE TABLET AND IT'LL HOPEFULLY GIVE US A LEAD.
TAKE THE DAY OFF TOMORROW.
NOT A CHANCE.


KRAKOOM
ORACLE, ARE YOU--
YES, STILL TRACKING THAT TABLET YOU ASKED ABOUT, BATMAN.
YOU ANY WORSE FOR WEAR AFTER HARLEY'S ATTACK?
I'M CONCERNED IT WAS SO BRAZEN. QUINN'S ALWAYS BEEN CONNECTED AT THE HIP TO THE JOKER.
WITH HIM OUT OF THE PICTURE, I'M NOT SURE WHAT SHE WANTS OR WHO MIGHT BE HELPING HER GET IT.
WAYNE'S "SAVE GOTHAM" SPEECH WAS AN ODD EVENT TO HIT-- WITH NO CLEAR FINANCIAL GAIN.
THE GOAL WAS STOKING FEAR. EVERY ATTACK IS ANOTHER WAY OF KILLING WHAT LITTLE HOPE GOTHAM HAS LEFT FOR CREATING A BETTER FUTURE.
I CAN'T WRAP MY HEAD AROUND WHY SO MANY OF THESE CREEPS HATE THE CITY SO MUCH.
I'VE NEVER BELIEVED IT'S THE CITY IN PARTICULAR, IT'S THE PEOPLE IN IT.
LUNATICS LIKE THE JOKER... CLAYFACE... BANE...THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY CAN'T CRUSH US.
THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE PEOPLE HERE REFUSE TO BE INTIMIDATED, WHY ANYONE WOULD EVER STAND UP TO THEM.
THE FREAKS DON'T UNDERSTAND...
...AND IT DRIVES THEM CRAZY.


YOU SOUND LIKE YOU'RE RUNNING FOR OFFICE.
HARDLY.
BUT THE CITY NEEDS SOMEONE TO LEAD IT INTO THE FUTURE.
WE
AND SURE AS HELL NOT ANOTHER OPPORTUNISTIC DEADBEAT LIKE SHARP.
RE-ELECT MAYOR SHARP
WELL... ONE PERSON COMES TO MIND...
GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE.
...BUT HE'S ALREADY GOT A VERY IMPORTANT JOB.
EVERYONE'S REPLACEABLE.
WORK ON HIM.
AND KEEP ME UPDATED ON TRACKING THE TABLET. BATMAN, OUT.


CHINATOWN.
WE HAVE FOUND THE SCARECROW'S HIDEOUT, BROTHER...
THE PENGUIN WILL BE HAPPY!
AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE ABRAMOVICI NAME WILL ONCE AGAIN BE ON THE LIPS OF MILLIONS!
JUST AS IT WAS WHEN WE WERE STARS WITH THE CIRCUS. WE CAN SHOVE FATHER'S PREDICTIONS OF OUR FAILURE BACK DOWN HIS THROAT!
BUT FIRST WE MUST FIND THE STRAW DOCTOR!
AND SHOW HIM WHAT FEAR LOOKS LIKE!
SONS!!!
YAAGHHH!
TWO HALF-CHILDREN-- EACH TRYING TO EQUAL ONE SON!


FATHER-- NO--!
ALL WE HAVE EVER DONE IS TRY TO PLEASE YOU!
I SHOULD HAVE DROWNED YOU IN THE WASHBASIN THE MOMENT YOUR DISGUSTING BODIES SQUIRMED FROM YOUR MOTHER'S WOMB!
BUT IT IS TIME I MADE UP FOR MY MISTAKE.
YOU WILL KNOW DEATH BY MY HAND! CRUEL AND SLOW! YOU WILL KNOW FEAR!
AND NO ONE WILL CARE THAT YOU EVER LIVED!
NAARGHHH!
PENGUIN NEEDS TO BE CAREFUL WHAT HE LOOKS FOR...
...BECAUSE HE MAY JUST FIND IT.



DON'T LET HIM SEE YOUR FEAR, ROBIN.
ONLY THING I'M AFRAID OF, COACH...
...IS YOUR CONSTANT BLABBING!
I SWEAR, I GOTTA BE THE ONLY PERSON ON EARTH WHO WISHES BATMAN WOULD TALK LESS!
THEN DON'T MAKE ROOKIE MISTAKES.
LIKE THE ONE YOU'RE ABOUT--

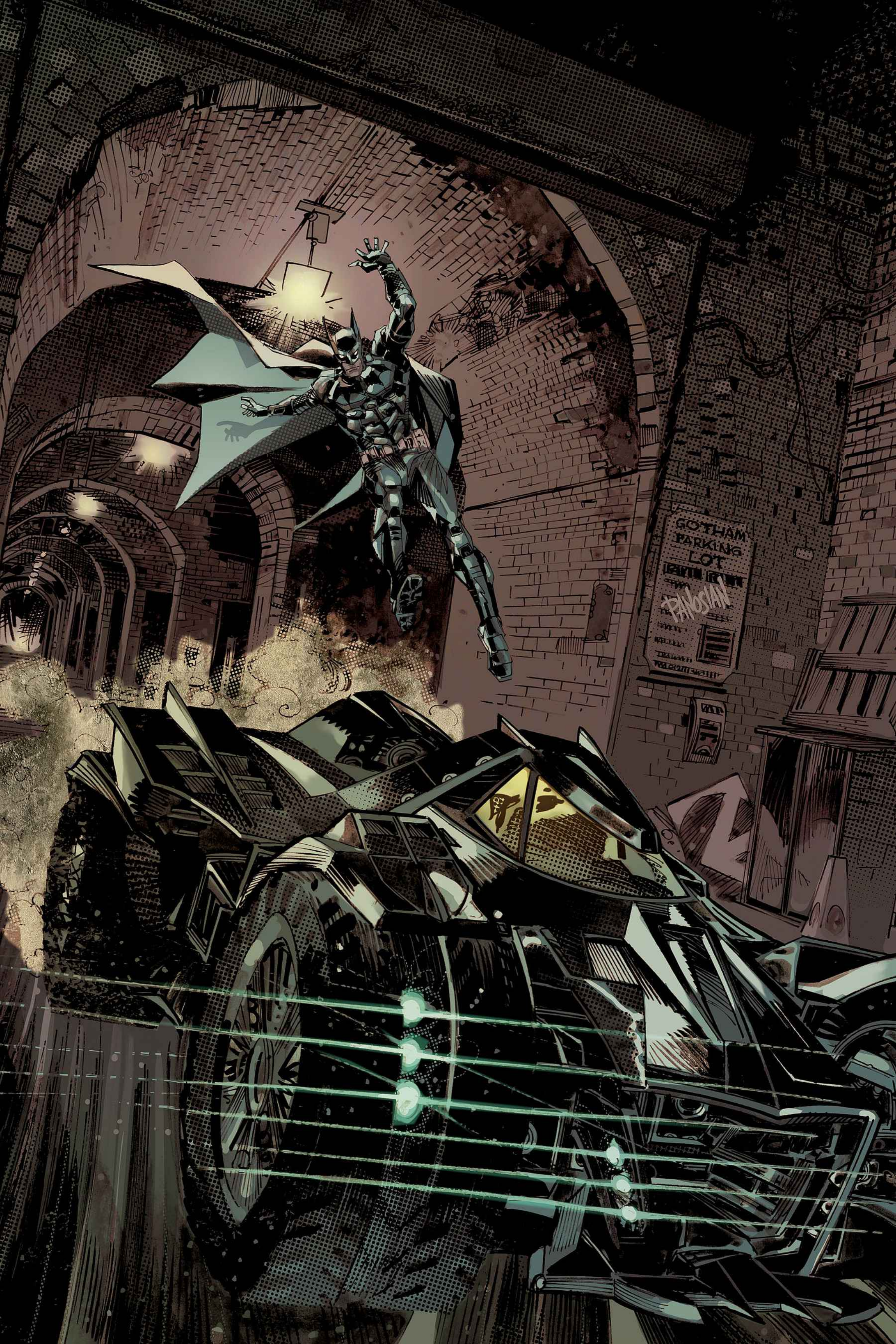

WOULD YOU PLEASE SHUT--
WHOA!
UGNN!
BOKK
HNN.
WHAMM
ARGHH!
SEE?
MY WORKOUTS ARE ALWAYS MORE RELAXED WHEN YOU DON'T COME HOME SO EARLY.
I CAN CERTAINLY SEE WHY YOU DON'T WANT ME SEEING THIS. YOU NEED TO FIGHT SMARTER.
THE SIMULATOR IS NEVER GOING TO BE ABLE TO COMPLETELY REPRESENT THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF SOMEONE LIKE DEADSHOT.



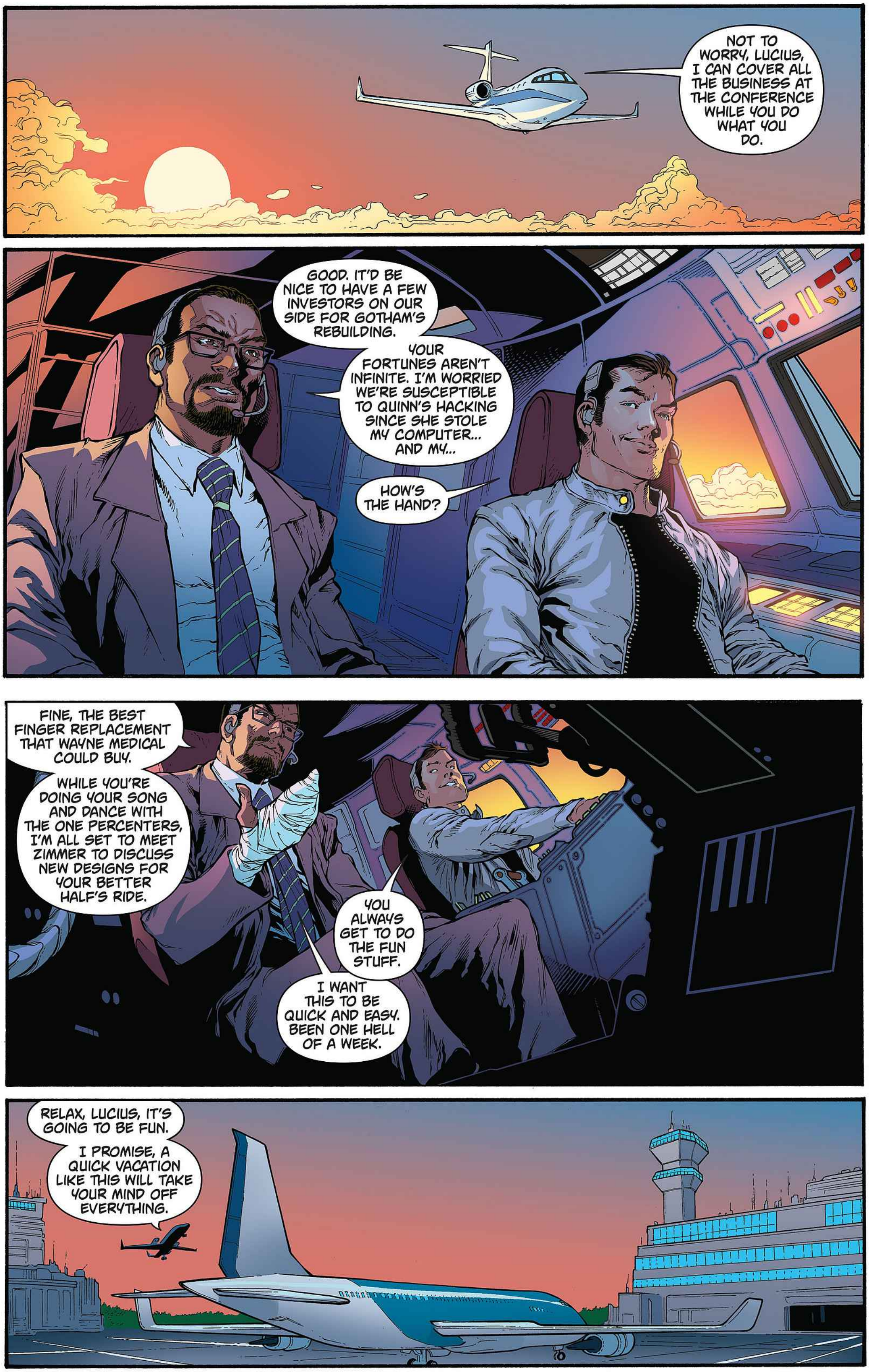
HEY, ALFRED CAN YOU DO ME A BIG FAVOR AND DRIVE BRUCE INTO THE CITY AND LET HIM TALK SOMEONE ELSE TO DEATH?
NOT WHEN HE'S TEACHING YOU SOMETHING SO EMPIRICALLY TRUE, MASTER TIM.
AND I AM NOT A TAXI SERVICE WAITING WITH BAITED BREATH TO DRIVE YOU BOTH TO YOUR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.
THE VEHICLE NEEDS CARE AND ATTENTION THAT I AM AFRAID WE ARE NOT ABLE TO GIVE IT.
HE'S RIGHT, BRUCE, THE CAR'S A MESS.
WAY WORSE THAN ANYTHING WE CAN DEAL WITH HERE IN THE CAVE.
LUCIUS HAS ALREADY REACHED OUT TO OUR FRIEND IN GERMANY.
I CAN TIME THE TRIP WITH THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN FUTURE-TECH EXPO AND TAKE FOX WITH ME. HE NEEDS THE VACATION.
THEN I'M GETTING IN AS MUCH BATMAN-FREE SIMULATOR TIME AS POSSIBLE!
GOOD TO HEAR. YOU NEED AS MANY HOURS IN HERE AS YOU CAN GET, ROOKIE.


KLIK
ELETE
KILLER CROC
LOAD
DELETE
CLAYFACE
LOAD
DELETE
BANE
KILLER CROC UPLOADED TO SIMULATOR.
CLAYFACE UPLOADED TO SIMULATOR.
BANE UPLOADED TO SIMULATOR.
LOAD
DELETE
THE JOKER
LOAD
THE JOKER
KLIK
JOKER PROGRAM ERASED FROM SIMULATOR.
OKAY, TIM, PAY ATTENTION...


GOTHAM STONE RIDGE PENITENTIARY.
I CAN FEEL THUNDER RACE THROUGH MY BLOOD.
I CAN TASTE THE LIGHTNING ON MY SKIN.
THE *VENOM* YOU HAVE FOUND NOURISHES ME.
YOUR DEDICATION AND DEVOTION TO ME WILL BE REWARDED HANDSOMELY.
REMEMBER WHAT I HAVE TAUGHT YOU.
THERE ARE TWO PATHS IN THIS WORLD.
THE PATH OF DEATH...
...AND THE PATH OF BANE!


GOTHAM PARKING LOT
PANOSIAN




NOT TO WORRY, LUCIUS, I CAN COVER ALL THE BUSINESS AT THE CONFERENCE WHILE YOU DO WHAT YOU DO.
GOOD. IT'D BE NICE TO HAVE A FEW INVESTORS ON OUR SIDE FOR GOTHAM'S REBUILDING.
YOUR FORTUNES AREN'T INFINITE. I'M WORRIED WE'RE SUSCEPTIBLE TO QUINN'S HACKING SINCE SHE STOLE MY COMPUTER... AND MY...
HOW'S THE HAND?
FINE, THE BEST FINGER REPLACEMENT THAT WAYNE MEDICAL COULD BUY.
WHILE YOU'RE DOING YOUR SONG AND DANCE WITH THE ONE PERCENTERS, I'M ALL SET TO MEET ZIMMER TO DISCUSS NEW DESIGNS FOR YOUR BETTER HALF'S RIDE.
YOU ALWAYS GET TO DO THE FUN STUFF.
I WANT THIS TO BE QUICK AND EASY. BEEN ONE HELL OF A WEEK.
RELAX, LUCIUS, IT'S GOING TO BE FUN.
I PROMISE, A QUICK VACATION LIKE THIS WILL TAKE YOUR MIND OFF EVERYTHING.


BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
HELP!
POK POK POK POK POK
BLAM BLAM BLAM
HANG ON, FOX!
THAT'S ABOUT ALL I'M DOING!
EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL!
POOM


SHUNKK
KLIKK
WHRRR
CHANK
WAS IST DAS?!?
FAMM


BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
SHRRIPP
BLAM
KRAK
GAHH!
WAS ZUM TEUFEL BIST DU?!
ICH BIN FLEDERMAUSMANN!


THIS IS YOUR STOP.
YAGHH!
YOURS TOO.
NOOOO!
Kaffeekanne
LAUF! LAUF!
HOLD TIGHT, FOX--IT'S GOING TO BE--


MAMA!
GNNN!
SKREEEEEE
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
EEEEEEECH


LUCIUS!
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
I--I T-THINK SO...
...ZIMMER... IN THE TRUNK...
SHRANK
WELCOME TO GERMANY, BATMAN.
NOW LET US GO TALK BUSINESS.


AS YOU CAN SEE, IT HAS ALL THE IMPROVEMENTS MR. FOX ASKED FOR.
BETTER TRACTION, SHIELDING UP TO 10 TONS PER SQUARE INCH, EXTRA EXPLOSION RESISTANCE, PLUS THE REMOTE DRIVING HAS BEEN UPDATED AS WELL FOR SPEEDIER RESPONSE.
ALONG WITH EXPERIMENTAL ADDITIONS INTEGRATED INTO THE DESIGN.
HOW "EXPERIMENTAL"?
ZIMMER AUTOMOBIL-MASCHINENBAU
WELL, EXPERIMENTAL ENOUGH THAT NOTHING LIKE IT EXISTS. THE PROTOTYPES ALONE ARE WHY THOSE MEN KIDNAPPED LUCIUS AND I, BATMAN.
YES. LUCKY US.
FOX, WORK OUT THE DETAILS.
HE IS EVEN BIGGER THAN I THOUGHT.
NOW, MR. FOX, I PRESUME THE "DETAILS" ARE THE SAME AS ALWAYS?
EXACTLY THE SAME. WITH THE TRADITIONAL REMINDER THAT YOU MAY NEVER SPEAK OF THIS. BRUCE WAYNE CAN NEVER FIND OUT.
HOW YOU HIDE THIS FROM HIM I WILL NEVER KNOW. YOU HAVE GREAT TALENT AROUND A LEDGER.
THAT BAT-FRIEND OF YOURS IS LUCKY YOU ARE ON HIS SIDE.



CAR WILL BE DELIVERED THROUGH THE NORMAL UNDERGROUND CHANNELS NEXT WEEK.
BRUCE WAYNE WOULD BE FURIOUS IF HE KNEW WHAT I WAS UP TO.
IMPORTING AND LAUNDERING EXPERIMENTAL TECH THROUGH A DUMMY CORPORATION? I KNOW I'D BE FURIOUS.
HOW'D THE CONFERENCE GO?
NOT AS WELL AS I'D HOPED.
AFTER THE PAST FEW YEARS, TOO MANY INVESTORS SEE GOTHAM AS A MONEY PIT THAT ISN'T GETTING BETTER.
IT'S HARD TO ARGUE THAT POINT.
WELL, YOU'RE THE MAN WITH THE PLAN, MR. WAYNE.
WHEN WE LAND YOU SHOULD GET RIGHT BACK TO WORK MAKING THE CITY MORE ENTICING FOR RICH PEOPLE TO THROW MONEY AT.
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU?
ME? AFTER *THIS* VACATION I'M GOING TO *NEED* A VACATION.
YOU'RE STEALING MONEY FROM ME, LUCIUS.
I CERTAINLY AM, MR. WAYNE...
"...I CERTAINLY AM."


ICEBERG LOUNGE
SZZKRZZ...
SZZKRZZ...
MISTER... PENGUIN.
I HAVE NEWS...
SKRRZZ--WHO IS...
ABRAMOVICI!
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN!? I SENT YOU TO FIND SIGNS OF THE SCARECROW DAYS--
OMIGOD-- WHAT--
I KNOW...WE... HE FINALLY LET US GO...
...AND HE GAVE US A MESSAGE FOR YOU...


CRAP! CRAP! CRAP!
WHY WON'T THIS DUMB THING DO WHAT I WANT?!
STUPID, STUPID, TECHNOLOGY!
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MY DEAR, YOU'VE BEEN MESSING WITH THAT INFERNAL DEVICE FOR ALMOST A WEEK.
WAYNE IS A PERPETUAL DOPE, BUT HIS PEOPLE ARE TOP NOTCH. YOU WON'T FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH HIS SECURITY.
BELIEVE ME, I'VE TRIED.
I KNOW IT'S BEEN DAYS BUT WE'VE BEEN HACKIN' AND CRACKIN' AT THIS THING SINCE THE MOMENT I GAVE IT TO YA!
PLUS WE GOT A FINGER FROM WAYNE'S MONEYMAN JUST FOR THE SECURITY SCANNIN'!
I MEAN, SHEESH, HOW MUCH MORE DO YA NEED NOWADAYS JUST TO LOG IN!



AND WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE TRIED TO CRACK IT, HARLEY?
"NOTHIN'!"
"NO, HARLEY. NOT QUITE NOTHING.
"IN THE SECONDS BEFORE THE SECURITY KICKED IN, I FOUND A SMALL HOLE IN THEIR DATABASE INFRASTRUCTURE.
"A HOLE I'VE BEEN TRYING TO ACCESS AGAIN FOR A WEEK.
AND THIS MORNING, WITH THE HELP OF MY OWN GENIUS, I HIT PAY DIRT.
WAYNE'S SYSTEMS ARE SELF-CORRECTING SO THE HOLE CLOSED UP THE MINUTE I WAS ABLE TO ACCESS IT, BUT I DID PULL SOMETHING OUT THAT MAY PROVE USEFUL.
A DATE AND A LOCATION.
FOR WHAT, I HAVE NO IDEA, BUT WE SHOULD DEFINITELY ARRANGE A WELCOME.
CALL THE TWEEDLE BROTHERS, HARLEY.
I HAVE A JOB FOR THEM.



KESEL AVENUE.
SKRASH
MAYBE THAT'LL HELP YA REMEMBER MY DAD!
THOSE BASTARDS IN THAT SUICIDE SQUAD MAY HAVE KILLED HIM, BUT I'M HERE TO MAKE SURE NO ONE FORGETS HIM.
STARTING WITH YOU, BATMAN!
KID, I BARELY KNEW YOUR FATHER.
BUT IF HE WAS ANYTHING LIKE YOU...
ARRGHH!
...HE DESERVED EVERYTHING HE GOT.
SHUNK
SHUNK
MY DAD WAS A SAINT DAMMIT!
KLANG


FREEZE SLIMEBALL!
NOW BE A GOOD SON-OF-AN-ANIMAL-THEMED-CANNIBAL AND GET YOUR ASS ON THE GROUND.
4·112
KID SHARK DOESN'T FOLLOW ORDERS--
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
--HE GIVES THEM!
BEEN TOO LONG SINCE I TASTED PIG!
SKLAKK
GAHH!



APPRECIATE THE SAVE.
CITY'S IN A BUDGET CRISIS THOUGH, SO I'M GOING TO NEED YOU TO PAY FOR THAT HYDRANT.
LET'S GET OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT HERE WHILE MY TEAM CLEANS UP.
WHY WERE YOU OUT HERE ALONE?
STORE DOWN THE STREET REPORTED A HARLEY QUINN SIGHTING. IT WAS ON THE WAY HOME, SO...
CPD
GLAD YOU'RE BACK.
HAD SOME BUSINESS OUT OF TOWN.
LET ME GUESS, BAT-WIFE SAYS YOU NEEDED SOME QUALITY TIME ALONE WITH UMBRELLA DRINKS AND SAND.
GUESS THAT JOKER INFECTION GOT TO YOU MORE THAN I SUSPECTED.
MY DAUGHTER, BARBARA'S BEEN BEGGING ME TO GET AWAY. I'VE PUT IT OFF FOR YEARS.
BUT I DON'T KNOW...NOW...AFTER THESE PAST FEW MONTHS...
HEY, COMMISH! WE CLEAR TO USE THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC MANACLES?
ONE HUNDRED PERCENT--JUST MAKE SURE YOU FOLLOW PROCEDURE AND TWO OF YOU HAVE THE KEY CODE!
HALF OF THESE GUYS COULDN'T BUTTON THEIR UNIFORMS WITHOUT ME GIVING THE OKAY.
THE OTHER HALF STRUT AROUND THIS CITY LIKE THEY OWN IT.
AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD DO WITHOUT ME.
GET SHOT AT AND CHASED BY HALF THE FORCE, MOST LIKELY.
I'VE SEEN THE GCPD'S FIRING RANGE SCORES. YOU'LL BE FINE.
YOUR LIFE IS NONE OF MY BUSINESS, JIM...
...BUT YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO YOUR DAUGHTER.


ARKHAM CITY HOSPITAL.
THANKS FOR MEETING ME, BOYOS.
AS YOU CAN SEE, MY NORMAL HELP HAS BEEN...INCAPACITATED. AND I LIKE TO CHECK IN ON THEM SINCE I'M SUCH A SOFT TOUCH.
NOW, I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN ON A SEARCH FOR POWER.
YOU HEARD RIGHT. ME AND MY COUSIN ARE READY TO TAKE OUR RIGHTFUL PLACE NOW THAT JOKER AND STRANGE ARE OUT OF THE PICTURE.
HOSPITAL
SO WHADDAYA GOT?
AND WHADDAYA WANT FOR IT?
BOYS, I THINK I HAVE SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE.
YOU TWO ARE A WELL-OILED MACHINE, SO I WANT VERY MUCH FOR YOU TO GET THE RESPECT YOU SO CLEARLY DESERVE.
BELIEVE ME, IN THIS TOWN, THERE'S PLENTY OF ROOM AT THE TOP.
SO TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR PLACE IN THIS CRAZY CITY, I HAD SOMETHING SPECIAL WHIPPED UP FOR YOU.
ALL I ASK OF YOU IS A QUICK, EASY FAVOR. WON'T TAKE YOU MORE THAN A FEW MINUTES, I'M SURE.
AND JUST TO MAKE TRIPLE-SURE, YOU CAN HANDLE IT I'M GIVING YOU WHAT EVERY WELL-OILED MACHINE NEEDS...
...A THIRD WHEEL.


DAMMIT, LORETTA, STOP SPITTIN' YER CHAW IN MY COFFEE CUP!
THAT WAS 20 MINUTES AGO, CHUCK! I THOUGHT YOU WERE DONE.
YOU THOUGHT WRONG! IF WE'RE GETTING THIS PAYLOAD DELIVERED TONIGHT I NEED MY DAMN COFFEE, WOMAN!
GOTHAM CITY 37 MI
METROPOLIS: 78 MI
NEW YORK:
REMEMBER, LORETTA, IT'S FIVE GRAND EXTRA IF WE GET THERE BY SUNRISE...
...SO I DON'T NEED YOU OR ANYONE ELSE STOPPING ME FROM GETTING THAT EXPEDITED SCHEDULE BONUS.
ALL CLEAR, DUM.
HOOK HER UP!



...YFOGLE SHIPPING AND RECEIVING
I FORGET I OWN THIS PLACE SOMETIMES.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY YOU BOUGHT IT-- OR AT LEAST WHY A SUBSIDIARY LIKE WAYNE INDUSTRIES ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTERS BOUGHT IT.
ZIMMER'S SHIPMENT CAN MAKE IT HERE CLEANLY FROM GERMANY AND HE'LL NEVER KNOW YOU'RE ALL THE WISER.
I'D BE OFFENDED THAT ZIMMER CAN BE SO EASILY CONVINCED TO SCREW ME OUT OF MILLIONS IF HE WASN'T SUCH A FANTASTIC CAR DESIGNER.
TIM AND I WILL WORK ON THE NEW CHASSIS AND PAINTJOB TOMORROW NIGHT AND WITH ANY LUCK THE NEW BATMOBILE WILL BE SET TO GO NEXT WEEK.
I'M SURE YOUR BUTLER WILL BE THRILLED NOT TO HAVE TO DRIVE BATMAN TO HIS PLAY DATES ANY LONGER.
WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT A PLAN FOR PICKING UP THE PIECES OF THE GOTHAM REBORN SCHEDULING. MONEY IS STILL ON THE TABLE FROM STAGG--
BRZZT BRZZT
HOLD ON...
YES, LUCIUS FOX HERE...
...OKAY, LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY, WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T CALL THE COPS!
THAT WAS THE DRIVER. WE'RE GOING TO GET YOU BACK TO THE CAVE.
YOU NEED SOMETHING THAT CAN FLY.


VMMMMMM
THAT WAS PERFECT, COUSIN!
EXCELLENT WORK ALL AROUND, COUSIN!
SLAP
BEST! HIJACK! EVER!
WE DIDN'T EVEN NEED PENGUIN'S SECRET--
--WEAPON.
OH, CRAP.


KZZZZZ
FUMMP
KLAKK
YOU THINK YOU'RE SO SMART, BATMAN--BUT YOU'RE NOT!!!
YOU'RE JUST A BIG DARK BULLY!
I HARDLY NEED TO BE A GENIUS TO STOP YOU--
--TWO?
HOW RUDE OF US, BATMAN, DID WE FORGET INTRODUCTIONS?
BECAUSE WE REALLY WANTED YOU TO MEET OUR FAMILY'S NEWEST MEMBER. OUR YOUNGEST--AND BESTEST COUSIN...
...TWEEDLE DIE!


THE BATMAN'S BONES FOR TWEEDLE DIE TO HANDLE, ARE SCARCELY FIT TO HOLD A CANDLE.
STRANGE ALL THIS VIOLENCE SHOULD BE, IN THE NAME OF COUSIN TWEEDLES DUM AND DEE!
KOOM
HA! I LOVE OUR NEW COUSIN, DEE!
INDEED! YOU WERE WORTH EVERY PENNY IT COST TO MAKE YOU, TWEEDLE DIE!
HOW DO YA DO AND SHAKE HANDS, SHAKE HANDS, SHAKE HANDS.
KRANG


I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR ANOTHER TWEEDLE FREAK!
NNN--
GYAHHH!
BAM
DEE! OUR COUSIN NEEDS US! SHAKE THAT RODENT OFF OUR NEW TREASURE!
AS YOU COMMAND, BROTHER!
THMP
THMP
THMP
HA HA!


RRN--
FLY INTO THE NIGHT, FLY OUT OF SIGHT!
SNAPP
STOP MOVING-- I'M TRYING TO SAVE US BOTH, IDIOT!
YAGHH!
THAT'S MANNERS!
AND MANNERS ARE NOTHING BUT A BIG PRETEND.
WHAMM
NOW YOU GO OUT-- BANG!--JUST LIKE A CANDLE!
YES! NOW CUT THE CORD, COUSIN!
FREE US FROM THAT DAMNED BAT'S CHOPPER TRAP!

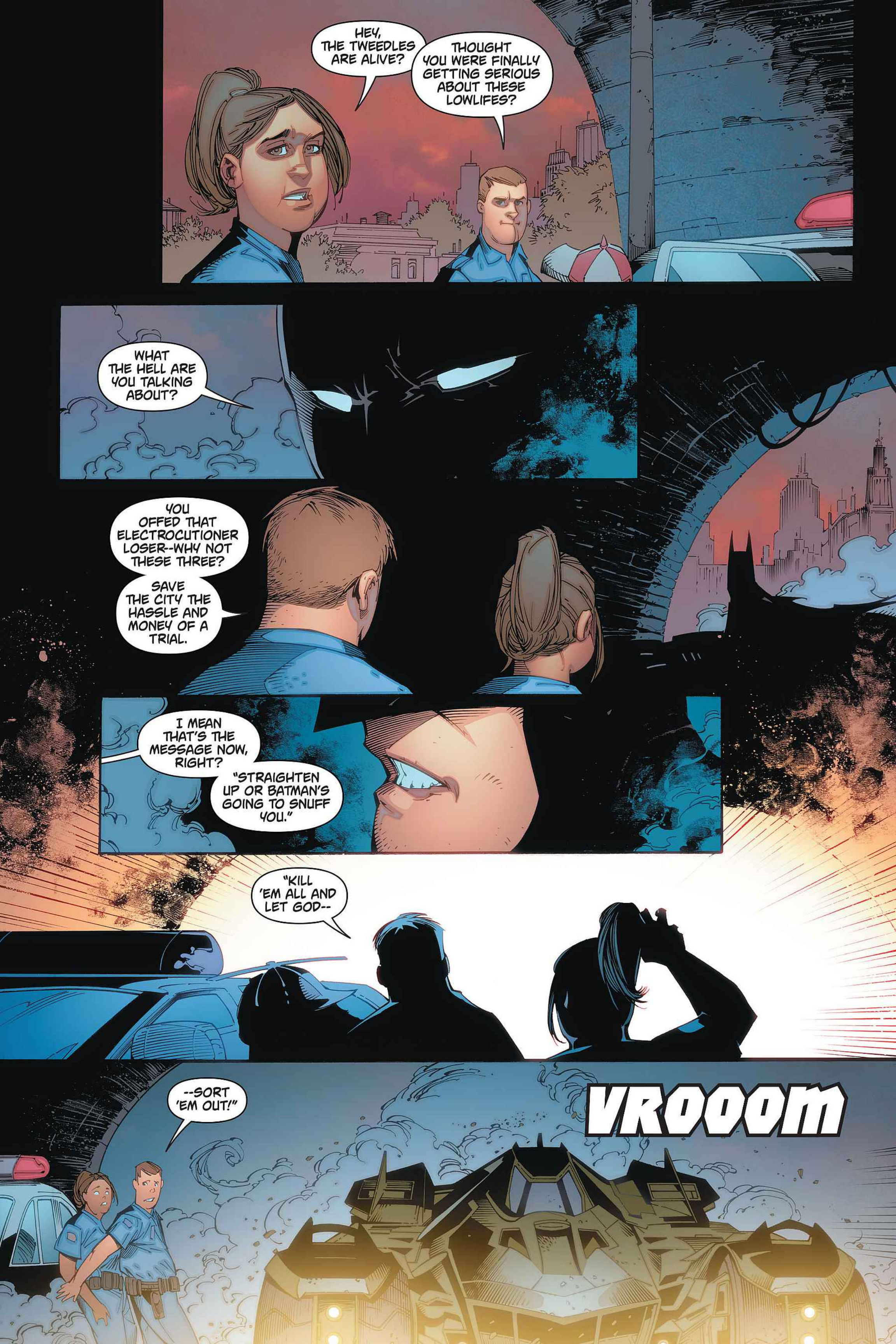

A SPLATTER SMALL, A SPLATTER LARGE, I HARDLY KNEW YE BAT AT ALL!
IT'S POSSIBLE PENGUIN TOOK THE ALICE PROGRAMMING A LITTLE TOO FAR WITH OUR NEW COUSIN, DUM.
BUT I GOTTA ADMIT HE'S JUST WHAT THE FAMILY NEEDED.
POOM
LET'S FIGHT TILL SIX, AND THEN HAVE DIN-- NAAK!
FWAMM
LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN.
COME GET ME.


"AND I WILL HIT EVERY BAT WITHIN REACH," CRIED TWEEDLE DIE!
FSSS
"WHETHER I CAN SEE HIM...
...OR NOT!"
WHAT IS THAT?
GO ASK ALICE.
KLIK
KARROOM
DEE! SOMETHING EXPLODED!
I THINK THEY'RE BOTH DEAD!
OUR POOR, POOR COUSIN! GUESS WE'RE GONNA NEED TO MAKE ANOTHER ONE!


WHROOM
CHRRKK
RNFF!
SKREEEEEEE
EEEECH


POOM
IT WAS HIM! I WAS TRYING TO SAVE YOU!
I BELIEVE YOU BOTH.
SKRAKK
ALFRED, GRAB THE REMOTE.


FOUR MINUTES LATER.
SIR, I NOW HAVE CONTROL OF OUR AIRCRAFT.
GOOD. AND I'M LANDING THE OTHER ONE AS WE SPEAK.
GCPD CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET IT DOWN LATER.
CERTAINLY YOU'VE HAD YOUR HANDS FILLED GETTING YOUR PROPERTY BACK FROM THOSE THIEVING TRIPLETS, AND I'M SURE YOU'D LIKE TO FIGURE OUT WHERE THIS NEW TWEEDLE CAME FROM...
...BUT YOU'VE GOT A MUCH MORE IMMEDIATE MYSTERY TO APPLY YOUR DETECTIVE SKILLS, SIR.
SUCH AS?
NAMELY... HOW DO YOU GET A CAR OFF A ROOF?
GUESS I'M NOT DONE WITH THIS CHOPPER AFTER ALL, BUT WE SHOULD START THINKING ABOUT SOME BATWING ADJUSTMENTS.
GORDON'S GOT HIS GUYS--AND THAT KILLER BAT EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT. THERE'S NO WAY TWO BEAT COPS LIKE US ARE BREAKING INTO THAT INNER CIRCLE.
WHO'D WANT TO, ALCALA? NAME A COP CLOSE TO GORDON WHO ISN'T EITHER IN A HOSPITAL OR TAKING A DIRT NAP. THAT'S WHY THE BAT AIN'T SCREWING AROUND ANYMORE.
GORDON'S PROBABLY JUST NERVOUS OF BRINGING ANYONE IN CLOSE, AND I CAN'T BLAME HIM AFTER ALL THAT ARKHAM CITY--
GCPD
--CRAP.
TWO OF GOTHAM'S MOST WANTED PLUS A NEW... ACCOMPLICE.
YOUR BOSS WILL KNOW WHAT DO.

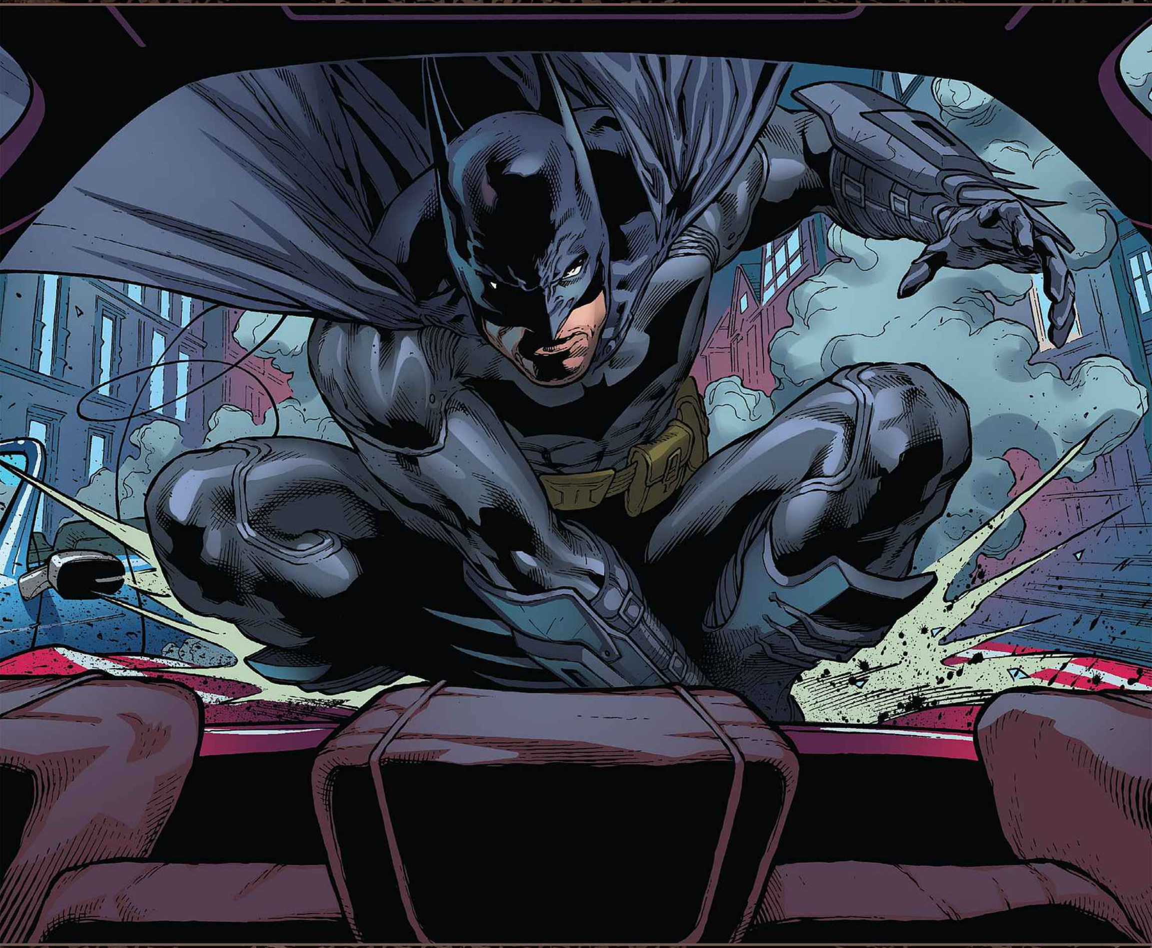

HEY, THE TWEEDLES ARE ALIVE?
THOUGHT YOU WERE FINALLY GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT THESE LOWLIFES?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU OFFED THAT ELECTROCUTIONER LOSER--WHY NOT THESE THREE?
SAVE THE CITY THE HASSLE AND MONEY OF A TRIAL.
I MEAN THAT'S THE MESSAGE NOW, RIGHT?
"STRAIGHTEN UP OR BATMAN'S GOING TO SNUFF YOU."
"KILL 'EM ALL AND LET GOD--
--SORT 'EM OUT!"
VROOOM



GOTHAM CENTRAL HOLDING FACILITY.
HOURS LATER.
BLAMM
BROTHER?
BLAMM
COUSIN?!
BLAMM

# THE STORY BEHIND THE SMASH-HIT VIDEO GAME

## The Joker is dead. But in Gotham City, evil lives on.



Batman has battled his way through the open-air prison known as Arkham City, barely escaping with his life. Now, with his nemesis gone and his outlook changed forever, he's ready to use the resources of his alter ego Bruce Wayne to shut Arkham down and truly transform the city he has sworn to protect.

But Batman's enemies, too, are more motivated than ever. Even as the Joker's tricks and traps continue to wreak havoc, the bloody throne of the Clown Prince of Crime is vacant. Villains from the Penguin to Harley Quinn to the terrifying Scarecrow himself are plotting to seize power.

Yet an even greater threat lurks in Gotham's shadows. A new vigilante has come to town, wearing high-tech armor and killing criminals wherever he finds them. But his true target is Batman himself, and this Arkham Knight will stop at nothing to take the Dark Knight down.

As the Arkham saga rockets to its conclusion, Batman's greatest challenge is about to begin...

**Writer Peter J. Tomasi (BATMAN AND ROBIN) and artists Viktor Bogdanovic (*Reality Check*) and Art Thibert (BATMAN: THE WIDENING GYRE) present BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT, the official graphic-novel prequel to the end of Rocksteady Studios' wildly anticipated BATMAN ARKHAM conclusion!**